

GURPS[®] Supers[™]

SUPERTEMPS[™]

The Employment Agency for Metahumans



By Mark Johnson
and Sean T. DeLap

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STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GURPS[®] Supers[™]

SUPERTEMPS[™]

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Thanks to: Candace Johnson, Matthew Johnson, Jeff Zahorowski, the Illuminati BBS,
the Red October BBS, and understanding editors

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ISBN 1-55634-169-5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

INTRODUCTION

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Roleplayer. This bimonthly newsletter includes new rules, new races, beasts, information on upcoming releases, scenario ideas and more. Ask your game retailer, or write for subscription information.

New supplements and adventures. We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us, but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

BBS. For those of you who have home computers, SJ Games operates a BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours per day at 512-447-4449, at 300 or 1200 baud. Give us a call!

Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any reference that begins with an SU refers to *GURPS Supers*, and an SS signifies *Super Scum*.

Supertemps was started in 1981 by Martin Huffner and Chris Albert, classmates in the MBA program at Columbia University. Neither one was a metahuman — or even knew any metahumans — but they recognized there was money to be made in finding “unusual people for unusual jobs.” Many industries could profit by hiring metahumans whose powers could reduce costs, increase output or make otherwise impossible jobs possible.

Within three months, Supertemps was turning a profit. Huffner and Albert were quick to capitalize on their company's already impressive reputation by offering Supertemps franchises in major cities. In their second year, Supertemps added civil protection to their services. Several large American cities had metahero teams of some sort (usually private or IST), but the distribution of metaheroes in the country's interior was too sparse to support organized, full-time teams. Though the meta-villain concentration was also lower, any fiend who moved in was generally unopposed (as was driven home when Livewire took Helena, Montana hostage in 1980 and held it for a week before a rescue team could be gathered). Supertemps' Board of Directors saw the company as a vehicle for bringing organized metahuman teams to under-defended portions of the country.

After a shaky start, this new venture proved even more successful than the original one. The Metahuman Services branch was soon split into Industrial and Guardian Divisions, and in 1987 an Entertainment Division was created.

Supertemps has been a classic American success story. In 1984, the company went public on the New York Stock Exchange; trading was so heavy and the prices rose so fast that trading had to be suspended six hours after it was first traded. There are now Supertemps offices in Europe, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Hong Kong and most of the larger cities of the United States. In 1988, Huffner and Albert sold much of their interest in Supertemps and retired; neither could be reached for comment for this book.

SUPERTEMPS

Policy

There are two primary differences between Supertemps Defense Squads and regular super-teams. First, Defense Squads do not always have a constant membership; individual supers are recruited and dispatched to the scene of a crime, depending on the situation.

Second, Supertemps' services are not free. Whoever called for them, usually a municipality or other government body, but occasionally a private citizen, is expected to pay. Fortunately, most municipal insurance policies specifically cover Supertemps activity.

The management of Supertemps considers public goodwill one of its greatest assets, and therefore has a large PR staff which does its best to let the public know that, while Supertemps *does* strive to turn a profit, it also does its share of charitable work. Financial records are available on request which detail everything except the salaries of contracted supers.

No super is required to reveal his or her secret identity; all that is required is some reliable way by which the super can be contacted.

Organization

Administration Branch

This is the largest division of Supertemps. It includes all of the non-super support personnel such as administrators, researchers, dispatchers, secretaries and public relations personnel.

There is usually an administrative office for each Defense Squad. This office is not necessarily a base per se, but a central location where teammates may meet when the need arises. A few offices are fairly extensive, and some contain other facilities as well (the New York office is on a ten-acre tract on Long Island and includes an extensive training facility).

Metahuman Services Branch

Industrial Division: The oldest service offered by Supertemps is the matching of metahuman talents with industries that can use them. Of course, some talents are especially useful, while others are harder to place. Bricks and telekinetics are always in demand for lifting and hauling. Supers with enhanced senses are often employed for quality control and other inspection assignments. Temperature-control abilities are useful in several manufacturing processes, as is power over metal, water and other substances. The demand for these superpowers is relatively constant, and a super can make a good living meeting that demand.

In theory, none of the positions in the Industrial Division are permanent jobs. However, some of Supertemps' contracts are for long-term jobs, renewed every year, and any super can request payroll deductions for medical insurance, savings and retirement plans.

There is no character point cost to be employed by Supertemps' Industrial Division. It requires only an employable super-ability, and pays \$2,500 a month. (The job roll is made versus super-skill level or IQ, LJ/8d, LJ.)

Guardian Division: The most visible, and most glamorous, division of Supertemps, the Guardian Division is contracted by cities or other governmental agencies (occasionally private citizens will hire Guardian Division employees as bodyguards) on a continual or as-needed basis to provide metahuman civil services — anything from rescuing stranded pets to opposing meta-villain attacks.

Responsibility for accidental damage (see p. SU80) is usually covered by the client's insurance and is not a direct concern of the hero. However, Supertemps will drop any super who repeatedly causes unnecessary damage.

Guardian Division employees generally have no more legal authority than any other private citizen. That is, they may make citizen's arrests and are expected to defer to police. Unless they are actually deputized law officers, they do not get the Legal Enforcement Powers advantage. Defense Squads' relationships with the local police vary from competitive to cooperative.

If a city contracts with Supertemps to provide round-the-clock services, often with regular patrols, full-time employment can be available to capable supers. Otherwise, metaheroes will usually sign contracts to be on call when they are needed. In either case, the metahero "group" that reacts to the situation at hand is termed a Defense Squad. In an area with a large pool of metahuman resources, the Squad will be optimized for the task at hand; in other areas, the same three or four heroes may be assigned every time.

Guardian Division employees enjoy a powerful Patron, at the expense of a Duty to the company. Full-time employees must take the 30-point Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less, and a -10-point Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less. For on-call employees the frequency numbers become 6 or less and 9 or less, respectively, costing 15 and -5 points. The Guardian Division requires a usable super-skill or ability and pays \$3,000 a month (minimum), and the job roll is made versus IQ (-4i, 8d/15d, LJ)

About the Authors

Sean T. DeLap and Mark Johnson are both students, studying English and Aerospace Engineering at UC Irvine and UT Austin, respectively. They started gaming together about ten years ago, and have been enjoying *GURPS* since *Man to Man* was released. With *Supertemps* behind them they're now enjoying other genres, namely cyberpunk and science fiction.

The Character Descriptions

Skills: The TL of skills is assumed to be 7 unless noted otherwise.

Super Equipment: Supers without substantial natural defenses may be assumed to utilize Kevlar fabric in their costume. That provides PD 2, DR 14 (against impaling attacks only PD 1, DR 2). Attacks completely absorbed by a Kevlar-reinforced costume may still inflict some damage on the wearer (see p. B211).

Campaign Role: This section presents an idea or two how to interweave the character's life with that of PCs. The character's non-super identity is especially interesting, since it is often overlooked.

Power Variations: Most of the characters in this book are built using 500 points. However, if your campaign would make better use of a mightier or less powerful hero, check this section. Many of the descriptions detail how to upgrade or downgrade the hero to a different point level.

However, some concepts simply won't work at widely differing point values. At the low end they become practically useless, while at the high end they tend toward the superfluous. *Utility* characters, rather than combat-ready ones, tend to experience this. In these cases, no Power Variation has been provided.

Where Power Variations are given, it is assumed that all skills drop or raise in level with the appropriate attribute. Enhancements and limitations are unchanged unless specifically stated (most often simply the Power level is altered).

The "Average" Employee

The media has painted an image of Supertemps that isn't always consistent with reality. Sure, a Supertemps employee is often a "knight in shining armor" that swoops in to save the day. But most of the time, Supertemps employees are much like anyone else — they get up in the morning, grumble about having to go to work, do their job, then come home.

This is because the vast majority of supers registered with Supertemps aren't world-savers or crime fighters; they're merely ordinary people with a unique talent that others find valuable. Compactor (see p. 22), for instance, is probably the world's most famous garbage man. Sure, he could roam the streets at night, but *why bother?* He makes a comfortable living using his ability and manages to make the world a little bit better place.

Of course, not all employees of Supertemps have metahuman abilities. The huge clerical and data-processing staff requirements of a worldwide operation such as Supertemps call for lawyers, accountants, secretaries, receptionists, computer programmers and hundreds of other jobs!

Among the Giants

Not everyone in the world is endowed with fantastic powers. In fact, the vast majority aren't, but that doesn't have to mean they can't serve as the center of a roleplaying campaign. People in all walks of life will have their lives influenced by supers, including the ones in this book, all of the time.

Naturally, members of some professions — such as police officers, FBI agents, and private investigators — will have more interaction with supers. These normals are far from helpless and can stand up to supers in many ways; they may have greater legal authority than the heroes, and with the wonders of technology they may actually possess greater firepower!

The interaction between the normals and supers sets the pace for this campaign. Villains will almost certainly be opposed, though they may not be feared. Heroes may prove very helpful, or perhaps merely useful. And some valiant supers may be uncooperative, through prejudice or an unwillingness to share the spotlight. Vigilantes will be the most curious case of them all; police may denounce them publicly, while secretly approving, or even aiding their actions!

Entertainment Division: The newest and smallest Division of Metahuman Services seeks to market and sell the abilities of supers that offer unique entertainment. Great care is taken to prevent any impression that Supertemps provides or condones a "freak show." The performances are typically quite expensive, complete with professional costuming, lighting, direction and all other aspects of production. On-call services are most generally available, although Supertemps offices in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, Los Angeles and New York handle dozens of full-time Entertainment Division employees each. The Entertainment Division requires a usable super-ability and Performance 12+. It pays \$3,500 a month, and the job roll is versus the worst PR (-3i/LJ).

Gaming Supertemps

The Supertemps Campaign

Supertemps is a natural for a continuing campaign. Supertemps' very nature is such that almost anything can happen, from backing up the day's hottest rock group to fighting Dimension Beasts from Planet X. A small Defense Squad is a very good setting for a GM and one to three players; in less populous sections of the country, the players may be the only super-powered help for hundreds of miles around, so they will work together as a Defense Squad time and again.

These campaigns don't require a specific headquarters and all the administration that goes along with it — Supertemps handles that! The heroes will be contacted to perform a variety of assignments, most of them within a specific area; but there will be times when a hero's unique ability might be needed somewhere else.

Supertemps prefers to place rookie heroes on teams with at least one experienced member. Some veterans, such as l'Ange Bleu (see p. 10) and Apparition (p. 12), serve as trainers of sorts. New supers serve with a veteran who assists and oversees their actions. At a later date, the former rookie heroes will be reassigned, possibly supervising newcomers themselves.

More Firepower!

A PC super group may find itself overpowered some or all of the time, or may have need for a special talent. The best solution may be to recruit or hire additional members. Supertemps can provide personnel on a permanent or as-needed basis, so long as someone foots the bill.

Of course, it's just as easy to say that a particular hero contained in this book is *not* working for Supertemps, and could join the PC team on his or her own.

No More Mister Nice Guy

Who says that PCs have to be *good* guys? Sometimes it's fun to put on a scowl, laugh in the face of authority and flaunt your mighty power. The opponents of such a campaign can be the heroes contained in these pages.

Remember that in the comic books, the villains almost never win. A villainous campaign could be played for laughs, or to show the players that being a villain doesn't mean being stupid. If enough players are available, half the players could play heroes and the other half villains. This could create an interesting set of rivalries, especially if every few months the groups swapped sides!

The players could also play villains who aren't truly evil. If anyone who opposes the law is branded a villain, it's entirely possible that some villainous PCs may be relatively humane. Perhaps they only yearn for the challenge of confrontation with other supers. These types of villains don't need to lose all of the time; if no lives were endangered and there was no property damage, there probably is no crime!

Adventure Seeds

Invasion Luna

A space-worthy meta-villain (perhaps Dominator, p. SS16) has been observed leaving the Earth's atmosphere in a lunar trajectory. Extensive astronomical observations were made of the Moon's near side to search for signs of activity, but nothing was noted.

Still, some important government agencies, including NASA, are concerned. They commission Supertemps to send a team to the far side of the Moon to conduct reconnaissance and report back.

If the PCs have no way of arriving at the Moon on their own, Supertemps will link them up with the Astronaut (p. 16). She's able to provide transportation and life support for the entire group, as long as they stay close by.

Sure enough, the team discovers a villain base in construction on the far side of the Moon. Since it's not finished, they should strike immediately, before all of the defenses are activated. If the team wants to communicate with Earth before embarking on an assault, they'll have to return to the Moon's near side; otherwise, the Moon will block all communication signals.

The number of base defenses activated depends on how much advance warning the villain has. Whether the team wants to simply trash the base or capture equipment and the villain, they'll have to protect the Astronaut — she's their only way home!

Steady There, Alpha-7

The most advanced autonomous robot in existence, Alpha-7 (p. 8), has gone berserk. Why? How? These questions can't be answered until someone is able to capture him. Supertemps and the public demand that this be done without hurting him; trouble is, he's absorbed some potent powers, and doesn't want to be taken alive.

To aid the capture, Supertemps has called in Kalkin (p. 36) to assist. If she can get close enough to Alpha-7, she'll be able to telepathically control the sentient machine, calming it down. Alpha-7 knows this, and will be shooting to kill with an Affects Insubstantial-enhanced weapon — which means the PCs have to defend Kalkin, too.

Here a Gadget, There a Gadget . . .

An NPC hero is captured by TRADE (see p. SS50). The PCs eventually follow the trail to a secret lab of the criminal organization (possibly an adventure in itself!). The size of the facility makes all but the most overconfident think twice about attacking without some backup, provided by Supertemps. In fact, there are a number of heroes who sufficiently dislike TRADE that they'll work without payment.

After breaking into the first large room, the characters will have to dispatch a number of technicians and some guards. These goons leave behind a cornucopia of high-tech gadgets. Not all are working, and not all are working *correctly*, though the PCs can't determine that with a quick look.

To get to the room where the captured hero is being held, they'll have to combat the base's real defenses — both guards and automated weapons. If the characters aren't being challenged, throw in some more villains who happen to be at that base, negotiating with TRADE (possibly *Super Scum's* Deadly Dozen).

The intent, of course, is to get someone to try those gadgets. Some will be helpful, some won't, and with some you just can't tell — but it should be fun trying!



Alley Cat

ST 15 (60 points) IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 18 (125 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 7.50 Move: 9

Damage: Karate 1d+2 punch, 2d kick; Swipe 1d+1; Thrust 1d+1; Swing 2d+1

Appearance: Female human, white, age 24, 6' 0", 145 lbs., shoulder-length black hair, green eyes. When transformed she becomes a cat, though not necessarily the same one every time.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Alertness +5 (25 points)

Acute Vision +2 (4 points)

Animal Empathy (5 points)

Attractive (5 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Luck (15 points)

Night Vision (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Strong Will +2 (8 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Stop crime, protect the innocent (-10 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Enemy: Los Angeles criminals on 9 or less (-30 points)

Impulsiveness (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Reputation: -2 in the underworld (-5 points)

Secret: Identity (-10 points)

Stubbornness (-5 points)

Vow: Won't use weapons (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Catfall (30 points)

Claws: Crushing (Switchable +1; 17 points)

Clinging (30 points)

Costume (20 points)

Doesn't Sleep (10 points)

Perfect Balance (25 points)

Regeneration (25 points)

Shrinking (10 points)

Silence×2 (10 points)

Speak with Animal (Cats only -5; Only when morphed into a cat -2; 8 points)

Power and Super-Skills:

Alteration Power 1 (12 points)

Morph-15 (Only when shrunk -2; Only to become a cat -4; 2 points)

Morph Memory-12 (Cats only -4; 1 point)

Skills:

Acrobatics-17 (2 points); Area Knowledge (New York City)-14 (2 points); Computer Operation-15 (4 points); Computer Programming-15 (8 points); First Aid-13 (1 point); German-11 (1/2 point); Heraldry (Gangs)-13 (2 points); Intelligence Analysis-10 (1/2 point); Interrogation-13 (2 points); Judo-17 (2 points); Jumping-20 (4 points); Karate-18 (4 points); Law-12 (2 points); Lockpicking-13 (2 points); Research-16 (8 points);

Characters



Running-12 (4 points); Spanish-13 (2 points); Stealth-18 (2 points); Streetwise-12 (1 point)

Quirks:

Teases dogs

Wants to be called "Olivia" — doesn't like nicknames

Thinks Simon Bond is a creep

Never goes to horror movies

Has a photograph of every cat she's ever owned on display

Story

Olivia Forrester cannot remember a time when she did not have the power to turn into a cat. In fact, she was in pre-school before she realized that other children did not share this ability. Her parents were disturbed when they realized their little girl was a metahuman; they feared she would be taken away for study, since her manifestation of metapowers prior to puberty was quite rare, and that other children (and their parents and teachers) would shun her because of her powers, so they taught her to keep her peculiar talents a secret.

Her childhood was very happy. She was a tomboy, and could hit a baseball farther than any of the boys in her school — but no one suspected that this was because she was a metahuman. Her mother continuously warned her not to show off — she was afraid Olivia might someday slip and let her secret out.

The only true abnormality in Olivia's childhood was her relationship with the family cats. She could communicate with them, but found feline logic to be quite alien to her human mind. For instance, one of her cats insisted on sleeping in the middle of the street. She explained to him that he was endangering his life, but to him, the warmth of the pavement and the idea that that was "his" territory were more important than the thought that one of the "big metal dogs" might someday run over him.

Olivia learned many things from the family cats — independence, self-reliance, body control, how to sleep in any position, and where her parents hid the Christmas presents every year. Her parents sensed this and took pains to temper her learning with a sense of morality, duty and conscience. Even today, she is impulsive and does her best to live life to the fullest, but is not a hedonist.

After she graduated from high school, Olivia enrolled as a computer science major at NYU. She was a fairly good student, though she had trouble concentrating during boring classes. During one of these boring classes she met Becky Thornton, who turned out to be another cat fancier. They became friends and shared an apartment during their sophomore year. The apartment building didn't allow pets, so Olivia had to convince their cats to make themselves scarce when necessary.

One evening the girls were walking home and decided to stop at a pizzeria. The place was empty except for five guys in the corner; Olivia later said that if she and Becky had known the five guys were members of the White Knights, or that this was their favorite hangout, they'd have kept on walking. The White Knights were a white-supremacist gang with ties to groups like the KKK and Aryan Nation; stories in the *Daily News* had been linking them to several recent murders of black gang members.

As the girls ate their pizza, they heard the squealing of car tires. "Nice driving," Becky said — and then the guns started firing. Olivia's cat-like reflexes allowed her to jump out of the way. Becky wasn't so lucky; the story the next day reported that three members of the White Knights and an innocent bystander had been killed in a gang-related shooting.

Olivia vowed to find her friend's killers. Her night vision allowed her to get a good look at them and their car's license plate, but when she went to the NYPD with her evidence, they discounted it — they said it was too dark for anyone to be able to see the killer, and the car had been stolen and was already recovered. Since the police wouldn't help her, she decided to take to the streets as a cat. She was able to go almost anywhere if she was careful, and learned more than she wanted to know about the actions of gangs. After all, how many people are overly concerned about keeping a cat from hearing their plans?

Eventually she located her friend's killer, holed up in a hotel room while the heat died down. Olivia left an anonymous tip to his location with the police. He was arrested shortly thereafter. Olivia relaxed somewhat, feeling that now Becky would be avenged. But she was premature — Becky's killer was released on bond, and a week later he was gunned down in another gang shooting.

Olivia still was not satisfied. She declared a one-woman war on the gangs of New York, taking the name Alley Cat and designing a mask and costume. She prefers to operate in cat form, but will become human when necessary.

After she graduated from NYU, Olivia took a job with Supertemps in their Administration Branch, as a member of the data processing staff. She has been working for Supertemps for over two years, and now is in charge of the New York computer office where she has access to all of Supertemps' computer files. She also occasionally takes assignments for the Protection Division as Alley Cat, when she feels her skills will be useful.

Campaign Role

Player characters who patrol the streets could bump into Alley Cat one night. Likewise, PCs who deal with Supertemps extensively could meet Olivia Forrester. Known crime fighters in her area will probably be contacted by Alley Cat, to be given useful information she's overheard. The method she uses to meet heroes varies, depending on what she knows about them. Since she has access to the Supertemps database, she is usually able to arrange a suitable rendezvous.

Personality

Olivia Forrester loves life. She tries to make every moment count, and if she starts to feel bored she does something about it. She is impatient, and finds it very difficult to wait for long. She realizes that some things take time — such as a stake out — so she will steel herself to await something. *If* it's worth waiting for. Whenever possible, however, she will try to speed things along.

This impatience provides a good way for the PCs to meet up with Olivia. If the characters are staking out a criminal site for some reason, the GM could make sure that Olivia was also staking out the site. Then, just before the heroes make their move, Olivia could charge into the fray! Even if the PCs decide to just sit back and watch, they'll have a mystery to solve concerning who the mysterious super was.

Abilities

Olivia Forrester is able to turn into any breed of domestic cat, but only one specific form at a time. This transformation takes several seconds, as Olivia shrinks in size and alters her form. Her clothing disappears as she shifts bodies, then reappears when she returns to normal. She doesn't know why or how, and doesn't care to learn. A blur surrounds Olivia during metamorphosis, so witnesses are unable to see her during a change.

When human, Olivia has several feline traits. She has retractable claws, which when extended appear to be unusually sharp fingernails. She is quite agile, though not truly superhuman, and her senses are particularly keen (especially her sight).

Olivia possesses much greater physical strength than her build would indicate, though again, it is not at all superhuman. She is able to regenerate damage caused by injuries, and requires very little sleep — both of which allow her to maintain a full-time job and still find time to fight crime.

Battle Tactics

Alley Cat almost always strikes from ambush. She will attack up to a half-dozen opponents at once, so long as only a couple appear to have firearms. She will take care of gunmen first, using her claws to rake the weapon hand. Once the guns are neutralized, she will use karate to knock out the remainder, using more kicks than punches or claw swipes. If faced with insurmountable odds, such as four men with assault rifles, Alley Cat will beat a hasty retreat. Often this will be up the side of a building, since her opponents cannot follow.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower ST to 13; lower DX to 16; lower IQ to 12; lower HT to 11; drop Acute Vision; lower Alertness to +3; lower Patron to appearing on 6 or less; drop Strong Will; drop Clinging; drop Doesn't Sleep; drop Luck; drop Perfect Balance; drop Regeneration; drop Silence; add Climbing-16.

750-point version: Raise ST to 20; raise DX to 23; raise HT to 14; add Extraordinary Luck; raise Regeneration to Fast; raise Silence to ×5.

ALPHA-7

ST 11 (10 points) IQ 16 (80 points)
DX 12 (20 points) HT 10 (0 points)
Speed: 5.50 Move: 4 running; 16 flying
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d
Appearance: Male robot, silver, indeterminate age, 6' 3",
300 lbs., no hair, red eyes.
Point Total: 550

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)
Absolute Timing (5 points)
Combat Reflexes (15 points)
Eidetic Memory (30 points)
Immunity to Disease (10 points)
Lightning Calculator (5 points)
Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
Delusion (Major): All machines have some level of sentience (-10 points)
Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
Impulsiveness (-10 points)
Low Pain Threshold (-10 points)
Overconfidence (-10 points)
Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)
Secret: Alpha-7 can and does tell lies (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Absorption: 2d versus Light (24 points)
Body of Metal $\times 6$ (48 points)
Broadcast $\times 4$ (20 points)
Dark Vision (25 points)
Damage Resistance +8 (40 points)
Doesn't Sleep (10 points)
Immunity to Poison (25 points)
Radio Hearing (15 points)
Temperature Tolerance (10 points)
Vacuum Support (60 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Vulnerability: 2d from Electrical attacks (-20 points)

Power and Super-Skill:

Alteration Power 6 (54 points)
Absorb Super-Skill-25 (No Concentration $\times 3 + 6$; Ranged +4; Reduced Fatigue Cost +4; Conventional attacks and defenses only -2; 96 points)

Skills:

Area Knowledge (USA)-16 (1/2 point); Area Knowledge (San Diego)-17 (1 point); Bard-11 (0 points); Biochemistry-16 (4 points); Brawling-12 (1 point); Chemistry-16 (2 points); Computer Operation-16 (1/2 point); Criminology-15 (1/2 point); Detect Lies-15 (1 point); Diplomacy-20 (4 points) Electronics Operation (Communications)-16 (1 point); Electronics Operation (Sensors)-16 (1 point); Geology-15 (1/2 point); Performance-15 (1/2 point); Spanish-15 (1/2 point)

Characters



Quirks:

Likes being called "AI"
Enjoys the beach
Speaks of desktop computers as children
Doesn't appreciate music (no matter how hard he tries!)
Avoids Kalkin (see p. 36)

Story

Alpha-7 was the seventh in a line of robots developed for NASA by Hastings International, a giant U.S. aerospace firm. The first six models were humanoid industrial robots programmed for repetitive industrial tasks; Alpha-7 used an Alpha-6 "chassis," but incorporated state-of-the-art VVLSI neural networks and revolutionary heuristic algorithms designed to take full advantage of their immense processing capability.

For over seven hours after activation, Alpha-7 never moved; the only indication of activity was a frenzy of electronic activity detected by the monitoring computers. Just when the project supervisors were beginning to think the project might be a failure, the robot sat up on its assembly table and began talking.

It ran through its diagnostic sequence giving the time, date and current state of its systems and then started announcing the day's news!

"How did he know that?" asked one of the technicians.

"It is simple," the robot said, turning to the questioner. "I have been monitoring the Associated Press news line for over half an hour."

The scientists were flabbergasted — Alpha-7 appeared to be self-aware! They immediately began a battery of tests designed to see just how intelligent it was; some were sophisticated pattern-recognition tests, but many were simple conversational questions ("What does a flower smell like?" "Where would you find the Isles of Langerhans?" "Who is Alpha-7?")

The tests were nearing completion when one of the technicians remarked that a self-aware robot would be of immeasurable value in exploring the moon and building a colony there.

"I am afraid that is impossible," Alpha-7 said.

"Why?" the technician asked. "You were designed expressly for lunar exploration."

"Because I do not wish to go," it answered simply.

Hastings' management, however, had invested a lot of money in Alpha-7 and intended to recoup their investment. They informed it that they were keeping it under guard for a week, at which time it would be placed in a capsule atop a Saturn booster and sent to the moon.

That night, using the same circuits it had used to monitor the news wire, Alpha-7 contacted the press. It told them about itself, that it was a sentient being and that it was being held against its will. The next morning an army of reporters descended on Hastings' corporate headquarters as well as a team of lawyers invoking the 13th and 14th amendments to the Constitution on Alpha-7's behalf.

The entire matter was quickly settled out of court — Alpha-7 didn't have to go to the moon, but did "volunteer" to assist Hastings in further AI research.

Since it won its freedom, Alpha-7 has secretly been experimenting with its components. One of these was a circuit which analyzed potential sources of damaging energy (once thought to be a concern when away from the Earth's magnetosphere); it adapted the circuit to *reproduce* any radiation it encounters. It tested the circuit by confronting a well-known meta-villain while he was committing a crime; the meta-villain provided Alpha-7 with a spectacular display of offensive and defensive energy fields, and Alpha-7 successfully imitated them. In the process it defeated the villain, becoming an instant hero.

Combating metapowered criminals appeared to be the best way to continue its tests, and the best way to get into the crime-fighting business was through Supertemps, so Alpha-7 applied and was hired as a full-time Guardian employee, securing an assignment in San Diego.

Campaign Role

Alpha-7 still remains the center of a considerable amount of attention. The average citizen certainly remembers the prominent trial (which received a lot of media attention before it was settled), while professionals in the fields of computer science, artificial intelligence, or robotics would do almost *anything* to get a good look at what makes this 'bot tick.

Conversely, if there are other forms of machine intelligence in a particular campaign, Alpha-7 will be incurably curious and inquisitive about them. He maintains some theories about the origin and nature of artificial intelligence, but has told no one. He'd like to have more data sources than just himself!

Personality

In most respects, Alpha-7 is like an average human being. His electronic brain is driven by logic, of course, but he has a considerable grasp of human emotions. If nothing else, he has stored vast amounts of observed psychological data that permit him to understand human behavior in most situations (maybe more than most humans!).

Also, he is not bound by hard-wired moral imperatives that prescribe his actions. For instance, Alpha-7 has *chosen* to assist law-abiding citizens. He is not forced to. Neither is he required to lay down his life for any particular reason. In fact, Alpha-7 currently feels self-preservation is his highest priority, not only because he's the only example of artificial intelligence, but because he doesn't want to die!

Though he won't deviate from an important decision for *any* reason, Alpha-7 is easygoing in most instances. He enjoys conversation, and has the patience to endure anyone's story. If it seems that those around him are made uneasy by his non-humanity, he'll suggest they call him "AI." That usually decreases their tension somewhat.

When alone, Alpha-7 likes to disable the less creative portions of his "mind." In such a state, he's able to ponder questions like "Why is the sky blue?" or "What would it be like to fly like a bird?" for hours on end, logging all manner of creative, even poetic, hypotheses. In the future he hopes to develop sophisticated electronic versions of artistic creativity.

Abilities

Alpha-7 enjoys several benefits of his metallic shell and electronic innards. His physical abilities do not exceed the human range (and the engineers worked miracles to provide even this!), but his reasoning ability is quite developed. He does not possess the storage capacity to record all sensory data continuously, so make an IQ roll to determine if Alpha-7 logged a particular piece of information.

His omnisimulator circuits are able to emulate all forms of energy projection and some types of defenses (Generic Full and Limited Defense, PK and Energy Shield). He can retain the new ability for a prolonged period at the expense of low-priority computational tasks, such as speech. Usually a copied ability is discarded after several days.

Battle Tactics

Alpha-7 has few defensive and no intrinsic offensive capability. Instead, he must configure his omnisimulator circuits to mimic the energy projection (or shield) from another source. The mimicking process is quick and painless, so clearly it's easier to obtain the necessary data from a willing source. Supertemps knows this and always dispatches Alpha-7 with at least one other hero from whom he can obtain an offensive power.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower ST to 8; lower DX to 9; drop Ambidexterity; lower Body of Metal to $\times 2$; drop Combat Reflexes; drop Damage Resistance; add Dependency: Electricity, hourly; raise Vulnerability to 5d from Electrical attacks; add Vulnerability: 4d from Lasers; lower Alteration Power to 3; drop Brawling skill.

750-point version: Raise DX to 13; add Acute Vision +2; add Alertness +1; raise Eidetic Memory to level 2; raise Absorption to 10d versus Light; raise Damage Resistance to +25; drop Vulnerability.

1' Ange Bleu

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 16 (80 points)
 DX 14 (45 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 6.50 Move: 6 (48 flying)
Damage: Wind Jet 7d+2; Wind Blast 3d+3; Thrust 1d-2;
 Swing 1d
Appearance: Male human, white, age 29, 5' 11", 195 lbs.,
 brown hair, ice-blue eyes.
Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Attractive (5 points)
 Combat Reflexes (15 points)
 Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)
 Reputation: +2 as a super (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Absent-Mindedness (-15 points)
 Bad Sight: Nearsighted (-10 points)
 Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
 Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
 Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)
 Sense of Duty: Normals (-15 points)

Super Advantages:

Body of Air (Link +1; Switchable +1; 60 points)
 Costume (20 points)
 Flight (40 points)
 Invisibility (Effective vs. all enhanced vision +5; Link +1;
 Switchable +1; 68 points)
 Super Flight×2 (40 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Vulnerability: 2d from Earth attacks (-20 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Air Power 6 (60 points)
 Vacuum-11 (2 points)
 Whirlwind-12 (4 points)
 Wind Blast-13 (8 points)
 Wind Jet-14 (No Concentration +2; 20 points)
 * Air Power +6 (Wind Jet, 24 points)
 Psychokinesis Power 4 (40 points)
 Telekinesis-14 (Physical Effect +1; 2 points)

Skills:

Area Knowledge (Minneapolis)-15 (½ point); Astronomy-15
 (2 points); Computer Programming-14 (1 point); Criminology-
 14 (½ point); English-15 (1 point); French-16 (0 points); Math-
 ematics-15 (2 points); Nuclear Physics-14 (2 points);
 Physics-15 (2 points); Research-14 (½ point); Stealth-12 (½
 point)

Quirks:

Refuses to believe his magical origin
 In spite of his own ability, 1' Ange Bleu wants to fly jets!
 Shares an apartment with four cats
 Finds mathematics to be rather boring (but, alas, necessary)
 Changes costumes frequently

Story

Paul Lalonde grew up in Montreal, the son of a school teacher. He was a gifted student and excelled in mathematics and physical sciences, receiving several full scholarship offers from major Canadian and U.S. universities, but Paul found these subjects to be almost boringly simple. He had a different dream; he wanted to learn to fly fighter jets. Unfortunately, he failed the Canadian Armed Forces physical due to his bad eyesight, so he accepted a scholarship to the University of Ottawa and took civilian flying lessons on the side.

After graduating *summa cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in astrophysical engineering, Paul moved on to Columbia University in New York for his master's and doctorate in astrophysics. His career was unremarkable; he taught at the University of Rochester for several years, then went to the University of Wisconsin, where he became a full professor.

One day, one of Paul's students brought in a clipping from a tabloid newspaper, describing an extraordinary tight alignment of several planets due to happen that evening. The article quoted several "prominent psychics" who said the effects of this planetary alignment would range from major earthquakes and volcanic activity to the activation of latent metahuman powers. Paul spent the next hour talking to the student, explaining to him how little effect the added gravitational attraction of the aligned planets would have on Earth and how unbelievably silly the tabloid predictions were.

That night Paul went to bed as usual, but awoke to find himself floating above the bed! He had no idea what had happened or how to control it; he spent the next hour flailing about, trying to get a handhold so he could bring himself down to earth. As he managed to get his legs hooked under the bed, the phone rang. He decided to let the answering machine take the call, which was from his mother's mother. When the tone sounded, Grandma Annie warmly said hello to Paul, asked him how he liked flying, and then asked, "Have you looked in the mirror? Go ahead. I'll call back in a moment."

He strained around to look in the mirror and found that though he could see his body, it did not cast a reflection. The phone rang again; this time he picked it up. It was Grandma Annie again; he asked how she knew what had happened.

What she said sounded like gibberish. Her grandmother, she said, had been born of a wind nymph. It was a family tradition that the nymph's powers would manifest in the first son born in the nymph's line, and then only when "the heavens were in concert." The planetary alignment must have been what the legend referred to.

Grandma Annie told Paul that by merely willing himself to, he could fly and turn invisible, and could turn his powers off just as easily. After a few pleasantries, she hung up.

Paul felt silly, but stared into the mirror and concentrated. Within a few minutes he appeared completely normal. With a greater effort he was able to will himself to fly, though he found that a little jump helped considerably.

He sat back to assess the situation. Despite Grandma Annie's folk tales and family traditions, he knew he was merely (!) a metahuman. His Seeder genes had activated, and the resultant powers were controllable by mental impulse. This was not uncommon for metahumans. Nonetheless, Paul decided to keep

this a secret, at least until he knew more about the limits of his abilities.

Even though he didn't believe Grandma Annie's tales, he decided to use them as a springboard to see if he had any other metahuman powers. Sure enough, he learned to manipulate air in many ways. He could neither create it or destroy it — he could only move it.

Paul seemed to have no choice but to use his powers to aid humanity, but he wasn't sure how. The answer arrived on that week's cover of *Time* when they profiled Supertemps and the metahuman phenomenon. He flew to Chicago and registered with Supertemps, who suggested Paul adopt a flashy name and costume. Reaching back to his French-Canadian roots, he became l'Ange Bleu.

Initially l'Ange Bleu's beat was everything from Milwaukee to Madison to the Twin Cities; as more supers joined Supertemps he has preferred to stay in Madison. His long career and articulate speeches to the press have made him very popular, especially in the northern Midwest. Curiously, one of his most useful powers has kept him from gaining nationwide recognition — not everyone knows what he looks like!

Campaign Role

Paul Lalonde still teaches Introduction to Astronomy at the university. Since the course counts as one of the two physical science courses necessary for graduation, and it's one of the few college courses where the students can see the instructor swoop in from the window in costume just in time to start class, it is immensely popular.

As l'Ange Bleu, Paul has been in the hero business for several years and frequently gives lessons to novices. Supertemps routinely routes new employees through Madison for a few months so they can learn from a professional.

Personality

L'Ange Bleu surprises those near him when they discover he wishes he was just a normal. He believes that being a metahuman carries an involuntary responsibility to help and protect "normals." In a sense, this is a very aristocratic point of view, although l'Ange Bleu's motivations are completely devoid of judgements of worth. There is nothing really *inferior* about non-metahumans, they simply are not encumbered with the extra duties that metahumans have.

Abilities

For all intents and purposes, l'Ange Bleu is an air elemental. Though he would bristle at such a nonscientific explanation, he possesses powers over air, even to the point of being able to transform his

body to one of air, becoming invisible.

By moving air rapidly away from a particular location, he can cause a brief vacuum. Circulating it around a region invokes a whirlwind. By directing it in a certain direction (usually, though not always, with an arm gesture) l'Ange Bleu can propel objects away from him. If this jet is more narrowly focused he can cause actual damage to the target, at the expense of power.

His flight is made possible by directing the air around him to push his body forward. Though in theory he should be able to do this with other objects, so far it has not worked for any object heavier than a few ounces. Perhaps with more training this ability will improve.

His costume incorporates a standard Kevlar vest (PD 2, DR 5).

Battle Tactics

L'Ange Bleu has almost no traditional powers of attack and defense. Instead, he relies on the linked Body of Air and Invisibility advantages to provide almost complete protection. He uses the Vacuum and Whirlwind skills to confuse or frighten his foes, preferring the Wind Jet to control a battle.

If a sufficiently tough villain is above ground, the Wind Jet may be used to push him off a building or into the ground. Another tricky use of the skill is to force a low-altitude flying criminal to nose-dive into the ground, plowing through asphalt. His Wind Blast is no more powerful than a pistol, and is seldom used.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower DX to 12; lower IQ to 14; lower HT to 10; drop Attractive appearance; drop Combat Reflexes; drop Invisibility; drop Super Flight; drop Psychokinesis.

750-point version: Raise Super Flight to $\times 4$; raise Air Power to 8; add Force Field (Generic Full Defense) Power 30; add Force Field-18 (No Concentration +2; No Obvious Effect +3).



Apparition

ST 9 (-10 points) IQ 13 (30 points)
 DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 6.00 Move: 7 (15 Teleporting)
 Damage: Drain 4 HT; Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d-1
 Appearance: Female human, black, age 34, 5' 9", 125 lbs.,
 short black hair, brown eyes, dark complexion.
 Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Alertness +1 (5 points)
 Charisma +2 (10 points)
 Common Sense (10 points)
 Empathy (15 points)
 Patron: Superemps on 9 or less (30 points)
 Reputation +2 with Superemps (5 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
 Compulsive Behavior: Takes charge (-5 points)
 Dependents: Children on 9 or less (-24 points)
 Duty: Superemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
 Enemy: Ventura (see p. SS52) on 6 or less (-10 points)
 Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)
 Secret: Identity (-10 points)
 Sense of Duty: To everyone she knows (-10 points)
 Shyness (Mild) (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Costume (20 points)
 Insubstantiality (Can carry up to No Encumbrance +1;
 Switchable +1; 90 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Alteration Power 8 (48 points)
 Drain HT-17 (Affects Substantial +4; Link +1; No Concentration +2; Rapid Fire +3; Does not affect Insubstantial -1; Only when Insubstantial -1; Touch Only -2; 52 points)
 Teleport Power 7 (70 points)
 Autoteleport-17 (Link +1; No Concentration +2; 40 points)
 Exoteleport-14 (16 points)
 * Teleport Power +12 (Exoteleport, 96 points)

Skills:

Accounting-10 (½ point); Acrobatics-10 (1 point); Administration-14 (4 points); Computer Operation-12 (½ point); Cooking-13 (1 point); Diplomacy-13 (4 points); Judo-13 (8 points); Leadership-16 (8 points); First Aid-12 (½ point); Running-9 (½ point); Shadowing-12 (1 point); Stealth-12 (2 points); Strategy-12 (2 points); Tactics-12 (2 points); Teaching-13 (2 points)

Quirks:

Takes her work home with her so she can be with her kids
 Reads *TV Guide* religiously
 Won't let her children watch R-rated movies on cable
 Relaxes to the sounds of cool jazz
 Vacuums only when depressed or under stress

Story

The onset of metahuman abilities often coincides with extreme stress. Clarisse Jackson, for instance, was driving home from work one day and noticed her son Timothy chase a ball into the middle of the street. She pulled into the driveway, shut off

the car and got ready to tell him to get out the street — but before she could open the car's door, she saw another car coming toward Timothy, without enough room to stop.

She placed her foot on the floor of the car and reached for the door handle . . . and the next instant found herself pushing Timothy away from the oncoming car. Then she turned and braced herself for the imminent collision — and watched the car drive *straight through her*. The driver only stopped for a moment, then fled the scene; Clarisse never found out who he was.

Timothy's older brother William came out to see what all of the excitement was about, and Timothy told him everything



that had happened. Clarisse agreed that, yes, it sounded like she was a metahuman, and no, she didn't think she was going to quit her job at the pipe fitting company to become a hero, and no, they couldn't tell anyone what had happened. Like most boys, William and Timothy all but worshipped metahuman heroes — and the thought of their mother being a metahuman was almost too much for them! But she appealed to them, asking, "What would Firebird Force (a popular metahuman team) do?" and convinced them they should keep silent.

However, as time went, on Clarisse saw so *much* she could do for her community and those around her with her powers — if she only knew how. But she was convinced the pipe fitting company couldn't function without her; she was their combination secretary, office manager, editor, spelling checker, mother figure and the only one in the company who could fix the copier when it broke.

After a month of agonizing, she applied for work with Supertemps, provided her assignments didn't interfere with her "day job." Her boys were so thrilled they cooked dinner for their mother — and even did the dishes afterward.

During her first few weekends with Supertemps, Clarisse — who had designed a costume and dubbed herself "Apparition" — underwent a battery of routine tests and did some jobs for the Industrial Division. She scored very highly in tactical aptitude, and found she could teleport items other than herself; in fact, her range and weight capacity was much greater when she herself was not part of the teleportation.

Apparition's first assignment with the Protection Division came three months after she first signed with the organization. A group of drug lords had hired a meta-villain named Death Lash as muscle, but he had gone berserk and was now attacking everyone in sight. He hadn't been able to affect Apparition, due to her insubstantiality, but the other two members of the Supertemps squad were unconscious and he was closing in for the kill.

In desperation, Apparition tried to teleport *into* Death Lash. The maneuver didn't succeed — she appeared a hair's breadth away — but as she materialized, the meta-villain doubled over in pain. As he attempted to stand up, she tried it again. This time he stayed down.

Clarisse practiced until she could control the amount of damage she could do, from stunning to incapacitating. She also read Sam "Watchdog" Mitchell's book, *The Metahuman in Combat* (see p. 61), and applied many of its principles. For instance, she learned that certain types of attacks were effective against insubstantiality, and how she could defend against them. She also learned new uses of her powers — such as teleporting heavy objects and dropping them on her enemies.

It was clear that Clarisse was team-leader material — and Supertemps needed a team leader in Kansas City. Initially, Clarisse declined; she didn't want to uproot her family. Her sons were in high school, and they had never lived anywhere but Miami. Two things made her change her mind; Supertemps offered her a raise and moving expenses, and a new vice-president came into the pipe fitting company and immediately started rubbing her the wrong way. Three weeks later, she and the boys were on a plane to Kansas City. (As it turned out, she was indispensable to the company; it filed for bankruptcy within six months.)

Campaign Role

Anyone who was in Florida within the last two years will remember the impact the Apparition made on Miami. Some may have served with her, perhaps even transferring to Kansas City when she moved.

Rookie heroes in Kansas City will probably be assigned to her Defense Squad, where they'll learn the merits and frustrations of teamwork under an effective leader.

One interesting option would be for a PC to have been the driver who almost hit Clarisse and her son. That driver would be the only person outside her family who might know the Apparition's secret identity. An evil PC might use one or both of her sons as a hostage, especially if he doesn't have the Common Sense advantage (earning the wrath of a skilled tactician backed up by a Defense Squad would not be smart!).

Personality

The one word that best describes Clarisse Jackson is "mom." She treats her teammates with respect, but is very protective of them at the same time. Some heroes chafe under this leadership — others grow. In any case, the Apparition turns out well-rounded heroes, ones who know where to draw the line between aggressive heroics and illegal activity.

She is absolutely devoted to her children, which means she does not hesitate to discipline them when necessary. The defense of her secret identity is almost solely for their protection, not hers.

Abilities

The Apparition is named for her ability to assume a ghostly, insubstantial form. She can teleport as well. However, her talent for teleporting *other* objects exceeds that of teleporting herself. She's not sure why, but it may be a result of the way her teleportation operates. She mentally picks up an object and places it at its destination — and it's hard for her to visualize picking herself up!

She has no conventional offensive power; instead, she attempts to teleport *inside* her opponent while insubstantial. Some law of physics keeps her from actually materializing inside her target, and she always reappears just outside of it. However, the attempted teleportation creates severe stress within her opponent's body. She usually only attacks to stun, but in crisis situations can stress her foe's internal organs to cause serious damage.

Battle Tactics

The Apparition dislikes individual match-ups. Instead, she prefers to concentrate fire on one or two enemies — usually the most mobile ones, or the ones that pose the greatest threat. This system allows a few more opponents to escape, but her Defense Squad has the fewest casualties and serious injuries (on both sides) of any in the nation.

In combat, her first priority is directing her squad, so she teleports around to survey the situation. Once the orders have been given, however, she does not hesitate to use her own offensive ability. Here again, she prefers to gang up on a single foe, since her ability works best to supplement the damage inflicted by her teammates.

Power Variation

750-point version: Raise ST to 10; raise DX to 13; add Intuition; alter Insubstantiality to carry Medium Encumbrance; raise Alteration Power to 20; remove Touch Only limitation from Drain HT; add a second Link enhancement to Drain HT and a first to Exoteleport; add No Concentration enhancement to Exoteleport; raise all three super-skill levels to 20; raise Teleport Power to 20; drop additional Exoteleport Power; raise Judo skill level to 15; lower Stealth skill level to 12.

Armator

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 17 (100 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 7.25 Move: 6

Damage: Karate 8d punch, 8d+2 kick (or 14d+3/15d+1 with Power Blow)

Appearance: Male human, Oriental, age 22, 5' 10", 160 lbs., black hair, brown eyes, skin is golden when transformed.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Acute Hearing +3 (6 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Handsome (15 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Bad Temper (-10 points)

Code of Honor: Gentleman's (-10 points)

Dependent: Eileen Townsley on 9 or less (-12 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Enemy: High Assassins of the Nimba Cult on 9 or less (-30 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Sense of Duty: Friends and companions (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Body of Metal×6 (Switchable +1; 53 points)

Damage Resistance +14 (Only when Body of Metal is activated -1; 63 points)

Enhanced ST +55 (Only when Body of Metal is activated -1; 176 points)

Trained by a Master (40 points)

Skills:

Accounting-12 (2 points); Acrobatics-18 (4 points); Administration-11 (1/2 point); Area Knowledge (Seattle)-12 (1/2 point); Breaking Blow-12 (2 points); Chinese-13 (0 points); Computer Operation-13 (1 point); Driving (Car)-15 (1/2 point); Economics-10 (1/2 point); English-14 (4 points); Escape-14 (1/2 point); Fast-Talk-12 (1 point); First Aid-12 (1/2 point); Judo-15 (1 point); Karate-18 (8 points); Merchant-12 (1 point); Motorcycle-16 (1/2 point); Power Blow-13 (4 points); Pressure Points-12 (2 points); Running-9 (1/2 point); Sport (Squash)-16 (1 point); Sport (Table tennis)-15 (1/2 point); Stealth-17 (2 points); Swimming-16 (1/2 point); Theology (Buddhism)-14 (6 points); Throwing-16 (2 points)

Quirks:

Plays home video games to relax

Quotes ancient Chinese proverbs (many of which he invents on the spot)

Loves being on television

Never washes his car

Plays with children every chance he gets



Story

Ling Liao never knew his father; he died just a few weeks after Ling was born. Ling grew up in Seattle's Chinatown; his earliest memories were of his mother and how tired she was every day after she closed the family store. She was a proud woman, and would accept no outside help in raising her three children.

Ling, being the youngest, was often picked on by his sisters. One day the three of them were roughhousing in the back of the store, and the girls decided to take Ling down and tickle him. As he struggled to get free, he heard a soft "pop" — and they all watched in amazement as his skin turned a deep golden color, with bands of bright gold!

The three children were terribly frightened and ran to their mother. She gave each of the girls a piece of candy and told them to run along, then closed the store for a few minutes while she put Ling on a blanket and told him his favorite bedtime story. Soon he was sound asleep; she continued to watch him through the afternoon. The gold coloring gradually disappeared as he slept and was gone by evening.

The incident was almost forgotten by the time Ling was twelve — when it happened again. He was still scared, and hid in his room until his skin returned to normal. Later, he told his mother what happened. She told him not to tell anyone else about it, and that he would have to learn to control the change.

The next day Ling signed up for a karate class, and started working at the store to pay for his lessons. He was an excellent

student, practicing constantly and quickly rising through the ranks. After two years of lessons, the *sensei* took him aside and explained that he knew Ling needed some special training, training the *sensei* could not teach him. He referred Ling to a man named Chong, who he said could teach him further.

When Ling looked up the address, he found only a old apartment house. He knocked on the door; it opened a crack to reveal a wizened old man with a short beard. The old man would have shut the door again had Ling not mentioned his *sensei*'s name. Chong invited him in, served him tea and conversed with him for a few minutes, then taught Ling an exercise. As Ling performed the exercise his body "popped" to gold, then popped back to normal at the end. Chong marveled. He had given up teaching, he said, because too many of his pupils merely wanted to "boot some heads;" he had wished for a talent worthy of his training, someone who was interested in the spiritual side of karate as well as the physical. He agreed to train Ling.

For three years Ling trained with Chong, learning the extent of his powers and how to control them. Chong attended Ling's high-school graduation; two days later, the old man died. Ling knew no teacher could ever replace Chong, so from then on, he trained by himself.

Ling accepted a scholarship at the University of Washington, majoring in business administration. His undergraduate career was undistinguished, except for three events: he came to the attention of the Nimba Cult (see pp. SS24-25; Ling says he has no idea why the Nimba Cult is after him, but suspects it may have something to do with Chong), he tried out for the UW karate team, and he met pre-med student Eileen Townsley.

Ling would easily have made the karate team except that he was tested at tryouts and found to be a metahuman. At the time, NCAA rules banned metahumans from competition; Ling attempted to have the NCAA create a separate metahuman sport classification, then lobbied for a metahuman collegiate sports league when the NCAA refused. Both proposals bogged down in trying to decide how to define metahumans (one definition would have included the entire Notre Dame football team), but they gained Ling lots of publicity.

In his senior year, Ling met Eileen Townsley, a sophomore pre-med student at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma. They had almost nothing in common, but hit it off anyway; where Ling was focused and intense, Eileen was cool and relaxed, and she helped him to relax as well. He makes the trip from Seattle to Tacoma at least twice a week to see Eileen, and for the first time in his life his grades have slipped. (He also hasn't told his mother about Eileen; he's afraid she will be disappointed that he is dating a girl who isn't Chinese.)

After he graduated with an MBA, Ling received a number of job offers, but none of them would let him be near Eileen, so he registered with the Supertemps office in Seattle. He took the name Armator and became a full-time employee of the Guardian Division.

Eileen Townsley

19 years old, black hair, dark eyes, fair, 5' 9", 130 lbs.

ST 9; DX 10; IQ 13; HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Beautiful.

Disadvantages: Duty: Hospital on 12 or less (not dangerous); Vow: Aid the sick and injured.

Skills: Bicycling-11; Biochemistry-11; Chemistry-12; Diagnosis-13; First Aid-14; Genetics-10; Physician-13; Surgery-12; Swimming-11.

Quirks: Fitness nut; Always punctual; Hates Chinese food.

Eileen grew up in a farm town in eastern Washington. The town's only doctor was an old-fashioned general practitioner who still made house calls, and Eileen decided that was what she wanted to do with her life. She enrolled at Pacific Lutheran University because her boyfriend was going there; six months later he dropped out of school to join the Army and she never heard from him again.

She met Ling on a weekend trip to Seattle. She's not sure why they get along so well together, but prefers not to question a good thing.

Campaign Role

Some people, especially sports fans, may remember that it was Ling who proposed that college metahuman athletes be allowed to compete against their "peers." Any students who went to high school or college with him would remember Ling as being a fantastic student, the kind many people lower on the grade curve despise . . .

He spends a fair amount of time, both in and out of costume, at St. David's Hospital (where Eileen works). Armator often visits sick children, signing autographs (in both Chinese and English) and raising spirits.

Personality

For some time, Ling was so preoccupied with doing well at school that he forgot how to have fun. In this area, his romance with Eileen Townsley has done a world of good. They go out to dinner, go dancing or watch movies as often as they can, which is a far cry from his former nights of study, study, study.

Ling loves his family very much and visits them at least once a week (he currently lives in an apartment in the University district). He used to tell his mother everything, but has kept Eileen a secret for over a year and doesn't know how he's going to break the news to her.

Abilities

Though he grew up in America, Armator studied martial arts and Eastern mysticism from a master. His skills would be formidable by themselves, but when combined with his metahuman abilities they're devastating.

Armator can transform his body from flesh and blood to a gleaming, banded gold substance. The change gives him natural armor and great strength. When he changes, there is a soft "pop" (make a Hearing roll at -2 to detect within five yards); no one knows what causes this. He can stay in the golden form indefinitely, though prefers a normal body when the hero work is finished.

Battle Tactics

Ling is quick to change into his golden form at the first sign of trouble. His increased strength and martial arts prowess generally provide enough firepower for most fights. If an opponent is proving difficult to handle, Armator will try Pressure Points or Power Blow (probably the former) to turn the tide. When using the Chambara fighting rules, Armator is allowed three attacks per turn.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower DX to 15; lower Body of Metal to $\times 3$; drop Damage Resistance; lower Enhanced ST to +5; raise Pressure Points skill level to 13.

750-point version: Raise DX to 20; raise Body of Metal to $\times 18$; raise Enhanced ST to +114; add No Concentration $\times 2$ to Power Blow skill; raise Power Blow skill level to 15.

Astronaut

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 6.00 Move: 6

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Female human, Amerind, age 30, 5' 6", 125 lbs., short black hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 530

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)

Absolute Timing (5 points)

Attractive (5 points)

Lightning Calculator (5 points)

Mathematical Ability (10 points)

Patron: Superemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Status 1 (0 points)

Strong Will +3 (12 points)

Very Wealthy (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Duty: Superemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Enemy: Unknown on 6 or less (-15 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Pacifism: Self-defense only (-15 points)

Sense of Duty: Indian and female students (-10 points)

Stubbornness (-5 points)

Vow: Vegetarianism (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

(All of the following have these modifications: Affects Others +4; Area Effect +4; Movable Area +3; Switchable +1; Not usable on those with Psionic Resistance or an active Mind Shield -1)

Doesn't Eat or Drink (63 points)

Flight (84 points)

Super Flight×3 (126 points)

Vacuum Support (126 points)

Skills:

Area Knowledge (Earth orbit)-15 (4 points); Astrogation-15 (6 points); Astronomy-12 (2 points); Computer Operation-15 (4 points); Computer Programming-14 (6 points); Electronics (Communications)-13 (4 points); Electronics (Computers)-13 (4 points); Electronics (Satellites)-13 (4 points); Mathematics-13 (4 points); Physics-12 (2 points); Savoir-Faire-15 (0 points); Russian-13 (2 points); Sign Language-13 (2 points)

Quirks:

Feminist

Dislikes cooking anything more difficult than a microwave entrée

Doesn't like riding in vehicles

Collects kachina dolls

Only writes computer programs in assembly language; thinks high-level languages are for wimps



Story

Linda Ravenhair was born in Blackfoot, Idaho. Her parents moved to Pocatello when she was five, and her father died in a railroad accident soon after. Her mother worked several jobs to make ends meet; the strain undoubtedly contributed to her death in Linda's junior year of high school.

This devastated Linda, as she and her mother had been very close. Her mother had stressed how important college was to Linda's future, and had saved what little money she could so Linda could someday attend college. Linda vowed her mother's sacrifice would not be in vain; she redoubled her efforts in school, made almost straight A's and got a scholarship to Cal Tech. As one of the few Amerindian students at Cal Tech, Linda stood out immediately. She soon stood out academically as well, and regularly appeared on the Dean's List.

During her third year, Linda was attending a physics lecture by visiting professor Harvey Banks. Banks was presenting some very difficult concepts, and one of the other students had trouble following the logic. This student was a low-level telepath, and his first idea was to probe the professor's mind to see if the professor's thoughts would clarify his ideas and then recoiled. He didn't know what the danger was, but he knew trying to read Banks' mind was dangerous.

In that split second, however, Linda's mind was touched. Somehow, the brief contact between the telepath and Banks had acted as a psychic "jump start," activating Linda's powers and letting her know instinctively just what they were. Banks and the telepath knew as well, but neither ever spoke of the incident.

That night Linda took to the sky for the first time, anxious to test her new abilities. Her first question was how high she could fly; after six or seven hours, she was still rising. Not only that, she found that she could function normally in the upper atmosphere, when logic said she should have succumbed to the cold and oxygen starvation. Not only that, but she didn't feel hungry or tired.

Linda orbited the earth for two days, enthralled by the sight of the earth, the moon and the beautiful stars, millions more than she could ever hope to see from inside Earth's atmosphere. Then she began the long descent back to earth, knowing she would never be completely happy anywhere but in outer space, but not knowing what to do with her new-found powers.

In her final semesters, Linda took several electrical engineering courses, focusing on microwave communication and integrated-circuit technology, the basics of satellite communication. She also read everything she could find about deep-space rescue techniques; so far no one had ever been rescued from orbit, but several theoretical papers had been written on the subject.

Shortly before graduation, the inevitable happened. Due to an interlock malfunction, the entry vehicle attached to the Soviet Mir II space station separated and drifted away, taking much of the station's oxygen supply with it. The cosmonauts aboard Mir were stranded; it would take two days to send up a rescue team, and the cosmonauts only had 18 hours of oxygen.

Thanks to her contacts in a national computer network, Linda knew the exact path of Mir II (the media was reporting only that Mir II was "somewhere over Africa"). With no regard for who might see her or what they might think, she jumped off her roof and started flying toward the rendezvous point.

Mir II was right on course; she reached the capsule twelve hours later. The cosmonauts were extremely surprised, to say the least, to see a woman appear at the station window with no space suit, telling them in Russian that she was there to rescue them. They made the only reasonable assumption: they were hallucinating due to oxygen deprivation. Two of the men passed out, and the third, deciding he was going to die anyway, removed his helmet and fell to the floor.

Linda found the external emergency hatch control, opened the station, held on as the outward rush of air threatened to blow her out and away from Mir, and hurriedly replaced the cosmonaut's helmet. She then improvised a harness and strapped the four of them together, and set out for earth, not knowing if she would be able to return them in time.

The rescue vehicle sent up by the USSR found Mir empty, with no trace of the cosmonauts. When they reported in, the would-be rescuers were told that their comrades had been returned to earth safe and sound . . . by a flying Tartar woman! (They assumed she was Tartar because she looked Tartar and spoke Russian to them; it wasn't until later that the Soviets learned she was an American engineering student.)

Linda had returned to earth, and the cosmonauts were safe and reasonably healthy. It wasn't until later that day, when she had been extensively questioned by everyone from the KGB to commentators for Radio Moscow, that she realized four days had passed between the time she took off and the time she returned the men — over twice as long as their oxygen should have lasted. This was her first hint that her powers could be extended to others.

Needless to say, when she returned to America a week later, Linda Ravenhair was an instant celebrity and was unable to get any schoolwork done at all. She still graduated *cum laude* from Cal Tech, but the graduation was covered by every news network in the country. Offers came in thick and fast, from exclusive contracts for satellite repair work to government espionage jobs. One network even wanted to make a movie called *The Miracle Rescue*, starring Linda and the three cosmonauts as themselves. In the end, she accepted only one offer; an invitation to work for Supertemps.

Since then, Linda (dubbed "Linda the Astronaut" by a TV commentator) has done a wide variety of space-related jobs, from full-scale repair work to positioning satellites to weather observation. She has worked for several governments and private firms through Supertemps and always maintains the strictest confidence. Nonetheless, she suspects the U.S. government is keeping track of her; her mail has been opened, she sometimes hears strange clicking sounds over her phone and believes she has even been followed once or twice. She has protested, but so far to no avail.

Campaign Role

The Astronaut could become involved in any adventure involving outer space. In particular, she can provide a PC super-team with a means to operate in space. Their own powers will function normally, allowing the heroes to engage in a full-scale super-battle miles above the earth.

Other metahumans might also help Linda Ravenhair investigate who is opening her mail, and why, and help protect her if her mysterious watchers decide to take direct action.

Personality

Linda Ravenhair is fiercely independent. She feels she has succeeded because she has never compromised her values for the sake of anyone else. She rarely seeks the advice of others, unless she has no idea how to handle a situation. She is very straightforward, but tries not to be pushy.

Linda is a feminist, and takes great offense at chauvinistic behavior. She has a soft spot for female and Amerindian students, and helps them in any way she can.

Abilities

The Astronaut's body is almost completely adapted to withstand long sojourns in space unaided. Precisely how is unknown, though many speculate it is the result of an energy field of some type, and not a true re-ordering of her cell structure. Her flight ability may be powered by this same energy source. Since Linda is somehow able to temporarily give others her own powers, this is probably the case. Linda cannot affect others if they have some sort of mental defense, so most assume her powers are somehow psionic in origin. She is not affected by *Screamers* (see p. SU35), however, so this is just a theory.

Battle Tactics

The Astronaut has one very simple tactic — run away! The exception would be if she got caught in a fight while escorting heroes into orbit (which hasn't happened yet). In this case, she would attempt to stay on the fringes of the action to observe. She would gladly allow someone to act as a bodyguard. Note that if she is knocked unconscious, PCs would still keep all powers she had loaned to them. Of course, she isn't sure about this, so the players may well assume otherwise.

BLACKSMITH

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 15 (60 points)

DX 13 (30 points) HT 11 (10 points)

Speed: 6.00 Move: 6

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d.

Appearance: Male human, white, age 33, 5' 10", 150 lbs., brown hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Comfortable Wealth (10 points)

Mathematical Ability (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Duty: Supertemps on 9 or less (-5 points)

Enemy: TRADE on 6 or less (-20 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)

Secret: Identity (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Damage Resistance +10 vs. metal (30 points)

Gadgeteer (25 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Magnetism Power 20 (180 points)

Bind-13 (Must use metal -1; 2 points)

Magnetize-12 (Metals only -1; 1 point)

Metal TK-20 (All metals +2; No Concentration +2; 48 points)

* Magnetism Power +12 (Metal TK, 72 points)

Super Equipment:

Body Armor (Based on Light Body Armor; Breakable: DR 15, HP 75 -15%; Can Be Hit: -6 -10%; 75 points)

Damage Resistance +30

Passive Defense +5

Skills:

Armoury (Body armor)-18 (8 points); Armoury ("Card-shooter")-15 (2 points); Chemistry-13 (1 point); Computer Operation-14 (1/2 point); Computer Programming-15 (1/2 point); Electronics (Communications)-14 (1/2 point); Electronics (Security Systems)-14 (1/2 point); Electronics (Sensors)-15 (1 point); Electronics (Weapons)-16 (2 points); Engineering (Electrical)-19 (8 points); German-14 (1 point); Hobby (Racquetball)-14 (4 points); Judo-12 (2 points); Mathematics-16 (1 point); Metallurgy-20 (14 points); Physics-16 (6 points); Sport (Racquetball)-14 (4 points)

Quirks:

Decorates his apartment in a "metal" motif

Reads throw-away spy novels

Never uses a key to open a door

Sloppy dresser

Video nut; especially likes old Jay Ward cartoons



Story

Even as a baby, Harold Wilkesom was fascinated by metal; the brighter and shinier, the better. His parents, afraid he would injure himself on the sharp objects, constantly and fruitlessly tried to separate Harold from his metal collection. Their worries proved to be unfounded, however, since oddly enough, Harold never so much as scratched himself with anything metallic.

As he entered high school, Harold's parents began to view his fascination as a blessing rather than a curse. He excelled in science, especially chemistry, and entered several science fairs, always with metal-based exhibits and always coming home with a blue ribbon. In his junior year he talked his way into a job with a local foundry to gain practical experience; within six months he managed to increase productivity by 10%.

Upon graduation Harold enrolled at MIT. He majored in metallurgy, of course, and placed out of all of the upper-division classes in the department within a month. (To make things more interesting, he took a second major in electrical engineering.) He excelled in his studies, and outside of classes he developed a reputation as a formidable racquetball player.

After graduating with masters' degrees in both metallurgy and electrical engineering, Harold accepted a position with a high-technology firm's research department. He worked on various projects for a year and was then assigned to a weapons research group. The group was supposed to develop a silent firearm with a range and destructive capability equal to a large

pistol. Harold was intrigued by the technical challenge and jumped right into the project, completely ignoring any ethical considerations.

As he often did, Harold took a completely different tack. Most of the design team worked on improving standard silencer technology, but Harold decided that the objective was to design a silent weapon, not necessarily to modify an existing weapon to be silent. To that end Harold proposed a radical new design, involving propelling metal projectiles of the same approximate shape and size as playing cards. They were skeptical at first, but decided to split off a group to pursue the new technology and to fund Harold's research for at least six months.

The young researcher assembled his team and went to work. They made rapid progress, and had a working prototype in three months. Its range and power were severely limited, but it was almost completely silent. Harold conducted the all of the test firings of the weapon himself.

He was on the verge of a breakthrough when disaster struck. Sometimes news travels quickly through the grapevine; TRADE had heard about Harold's new weapon and wanted to buy it from him. He rejected their offer out of hand. The next day TRADE agents kidnapped him and stole his notes and the prototype, then forced him to continue his research under duress.

While he was a "guest" of TRADE, Harold began rethinking his idea that technology was merely a tool and that he wasn't responsible for who used that tool. TRADE knew what it wanted, and didn't care how they got it. He still wanted to perfect his card-shooter, but didn't want it to fall into TRADE's hands. Then one day he overheard a casual remark that suggested that when his research was finished, he would be killed.

Wilkesom began to formulate a plan. A TRADE technician always fired the prototype in the presence of Harold and his guards. Harold noticed that the technician always aimed at the same precise spot, so he modified the weapon to shoot three cards simultaneously, then have them ricochet off the target and hit his captors. It was a slim chance, but it might work.

Amazingly, the plan worked just as Harold had planned. He put on the uniform of one of the guards, grabbed the card-shooter and returned to the lab undetected. There he destroyed his notes and equipment, grabbed the remaining cards and tried to sneak out of the base. He made it out of the building before he was spotted, but managed to shoot his way out of the base and escape.

Once he had a chance to settle back and think for a moment, he decided that the card-shooter was too dangerous to be made widely available and that he could put it to good use by using it to fight crime. He had a costume designed and became the Dealer.

The Dealer enjoyed moderate success, working primarily with a private super-team in Chicago. Harold developed a new type of body armor to aid in his efforts. His favorite tactic was to ricochet a card off a building or other solid object, hitting an opponent who wasn't expecting it.

After one of his battles, a member of the super-team came up to him and asked how he had made a particular shot. Harold had to think for a moment, then realized that he shouldn't have been able to make that shot, it violated the laws of physics! He did some experimenting the next day and came to the conclusion that he was somehow affecting the metal himself. This would explain, among other things, why test-firings of the weapon had never worked properly unless he was present!

The Dealer retired as Harold Wilkesom experimented with his powers. He found he was able to move metal with his mind. As his tests progressed, he learned how to shape and melt metal and, in some cases, could even change one kind of metal into

another! Harold adopted a new persona, calling himself the Blacksmith, and registered with Supertemps. He still engages in some crime fighting, but works primarily for the Industrial Division, aiding industries that can use his special abilities.

Campaign Role

Characters with a strong scientific background may have gone to school with Harold Wilkesom, or may have heard of his research. Other members of the Industrial Division may occasionally work with the Blacksmith.

If a meta-villain figures out that Blacksmith and the Dealer are one and the same, he may decide to come after Blacksmith to settle an old score.

While his primary specialty is manipulating metal, Harold is also a Gadgeteer. Characters needing a piece of specialized equipment could contact him; not only does he enjoy designing unusual devices, he can fabricate all of the parts he needs — and he doesn't need a machine shop to do it!

Personality

Harold Wilkesom is much more of a scientist than he is a crime fighter. He is insatiably curious, and still fascinated by metal. His apartment's relentless metallic motif usually unnerves his few guests. Harold is not a shy person, but he is not social, either. He has few friends, but is loyal to them. He is very slow to anger, even in volatile situations; the exception to this is anything that involves TRADE, for obvious reasons.

Abilities

Blacksmith is able to affect metal with a form of telekinesis. He can lift several tons, and can propel small amounts at bullet speeds. He also subconsciously maintains a force field which protects him from metal-based attacks. He wears a suit of body armor of his own design, constructed from synthetic fibers and special metallic alloys. The suit weighs around 60 lbs., but Blacksmith's power neutralizes its encumbrance.

Blacksmith has never tried his powers on "animate" metal objects (such as Alpha-7 or Kid Chrome). He assumes that they would work, but he doesn't know what effect they would have — for instance, whether Kid Chrome's hands would still work if he reshaped them — and doesn't really want to find out, for fear he could injure his subject permanently.

Battle Tactics

Blacksmith has enough power to levitate himself, and he usually flies to trouble spots. He does not have enough power to both fly *and* use his offensive powers, though, so he will land before attacking. He uses Bind against low-ST opponents first.

He usually carries enough metal to wrap up three people. After that he will use any metal in the vicinity, which he always returns afterwards. If he perceives that someone needs to be taken out directly, he will hurl any available metal at them at high speed.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower DX to 11; lower HT to 10; drop Gadgeteer; lower DR vs. metal to +4; lower Magnetism Power to 16; lower Metal TK skill level to 13; lower additional Metal TK Power to +1; drop extra Passive Defense; lower Damage Resistance of the body armor to +20.

750-point version: Raise IQ to 17; raise Damage Resistance vs. metal to +12; raise Magnetism Power to 40; raise Passive Defense of the body armor to +2.

CLONE

ST 13 (30 points) IQ 14 (45 points)

DX 13 (30 points) HT 13 (30 points)

Speed: 6.50 Move: 8 (10 flying)

Damage: Blaster 8d; Thrust 1d; Swing 1d+3

Appearance: Varies. His natural form is male human, white, age 29, 6' 0", 200 lbs., brown hair, brown eyes, tanned complexion.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Charisma +1 (5 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Danger Sense (15 points)

Extraordinary Luck (30 points)

Musical Ability +2 (2 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Compulsive Behavior: Practical joker (-10 points)

Delusion: Insists Elvis was a gifted character actor (-5 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Enemies: Various meta-villains he's "betrayed" on 9 or less (-30 points)

Secret: Identity (-20 points)

Unluckiness (-10 points)

Weak Will -2 (-16 points)

Power and Super-Skills:

Alteration Power 5 (60 points)

Morph-18 (Humanoid forms only -1; 24 points)

Morph Memory-13 (Can memorize forms from visual images +4; Humanoid forms only -1; 20 points)

Super Equipment:

Vari-blaster (Breakable: DR 15, HP 75 -15%; Variable hardware configuration +5%; 110 points)

Blaster Power 13 (Generic Crushing Missile)

Blaster-16 (No Concentration +2; Variable special effect +2)

Force Field (Breakable: DR 15, HP 60 -15%; 100 points)

Force Field Power 14 (Generic Full Defense)

Force Field-16 (No Concentration +2; No Obvious Effect +3)

Jet Pack (Breakable: DR 15, HP 40 -15%; 34 points)

Flight

Skills:

Acting-12 (1/2 point); Acrobatics-11 (1 point); Bard-14 (2 points); Brawling-14 (2 points); Fast-Draw (Pistol)-12 (1/2 point); Fast-Talk-14 (2 points); Guns (Pistol)-14 (1/2 point); Guns (Rifle)-15 (1 point); Judo-10 (1/2 point); Karate-11 (1 point); Musical Instrument (Guitar)-14 (1 point); Performance-16 (6 points); Running-12 (2 points); Sex Appeal-13 (1 point); Singing-14 (1 point); Stealth-12 (1 point); Ventriloquism-13 (2 points)



Quirks:

Always keeps one of the Morph slots filled with The King

Can't resist a piece of German chocolate cake

Thinks today's popular music is sheer commercial tripe

Makes a trip to Graceland every year

Story

Charlie Wheeler was an Elvis Presley fan before it was cool or camp. He came by it naturally; his parents were fans since Elvis' earliest days, and their household had its share of Elvis memorabilia, from the velvet painting above the sofa to the figurines in the curio case.

By the time Charlie was in seventh grade, he was on his way to becoming a pretty good Elvis impersonator. He adopted Elvis' early hair style and leather jacket, but he was still too short and his voice was too high-pitched. Still, he continued to emulate his idol.

One day Charlie came down with a terrible cold. He stayed in bed, too weak to change the record on his turntable, listening to Elvis' early singles over and over again. The fourteenth time "Heartbreak Hotel" came around, Charlie started singing along and found that his voice had dropped over an octave and sounded like Elvis'! He dragged himself out of bed and looked in the mirror; a perfect image of Elvis stared back at him!

Charlie realized he was a metahuman and could transform himself into The King at will. He decided to keep this knowledge secret; he knew he would be pestered into performing as Elvis all the time if others knew, and he wanted to save his first performance for The King himself.

Unfortunately, it was not to be; Elvis died before Charlie could perform for him. Undaunted, Charlie set off for Hollywood with two suitcases, a high school diploma and an idea for a television special memorializing The King.

No one wanted to touch the idea, however. The only offers Charlie got were for Elvis impersonation contests and one-night gigs in bars. No one understood that Charlie was *serious* in his tributes to The King!

At about this time, Charlie found that he could assume forms other than Elvis'. He again went the rounds, trying to drum up support for a television special. Only one producer showed any interest and he would only touch the project if Charlie put up most of the money. Undaunted, Charlie borrowed almost

\$250,000 from friends, relatives and backers back home to produce the show.

"Charlie the Clone Presents Elvis Presley" was a disaster. Charlie had figured on his talent to carry the show; in his naivete, he hadn't counted on technical details, supporting co-stars or any of the details of Hollywood reality.

Soon after the special aired, Charlie received an offer to sign up with Supertemps. They occasionally received requests for an exact double — usually a political leader or celebrity, but occasionally for movie stunt work. Charlie was skeptical about his ability to do this, but he figured it would pay the bills.

As it turned out, Charlie — now code-named Clone — did quite well. He did everything from stand in for George Burns in a parade to posing with Stevie Wonder and a wax double in an ad for Madame Tussaud's Exhibition. Hollywood eventually forgot (or stopped mentioning) the embarrassing special, and Clone began getting more bookings than he could handle. His favorite job was a three-man show with John Byner and Rich Little, and he shows up about once every two weeks or so on *Late Night with David Letterman*.

One of Supertemps' more ambitious and dangerous, and therefore well-paying projects involved using Clone in order to impersonate another metahuman. Many villains' schemes involved distractions that would lead a hero team away from the true threat; with Clone on the job, a hero could appear to be in two places at once. Sometimes his presence alone would deter the villains; at other times he would stall them until the real heroes could arrive.

The plan proved to be highly successful, and Clone suggested that he would be able to do much better if he could simulate some of the superpowers of the heroes he was impersonating; he could assume their general appearance, costume and voice, but not their powers. Several Gadgeteers, including Blacksmith (p. 18) and Skylord (p. 54) began working on a gadget that would generate a generic energy blast and invisible force field — two effects which could simulate a wide range of powers.

Supertemps now deploys Clone around the country. This wide exposure helps to conceal the truth about his involvement with Supertemps; only law enforcement groups (such as ISTs and the FBI) have any inkling as to what Clone does. Most people forgot about him after his embarrassing television special, which is just the way Clone likes it.

Campaign Role

With his ability to imitate anyone, Clone could fit into any super scenario as a diversion.

He has devised an interesting, but dangerous, plan that Supertemps is considering: he plans to assume the form of a captured villain. He'll pretend to have broken out of prison and will contact the villain's former allies, then infiltrate their team. Once he does, he will contact a Defense Squad, who will come in to capture the complete team.

This plan will probably only work if the villain team does not include a telepath; Clone is currently working at his regular duties while waiting for a proper opportunity.

Personality

Despite all the ups and downs his life has had, Charlie has not become cynical. He enjoys life as much or more than the next fellow. His debts are slowly being paid off, and he can still find time to listen to his favorite albums.

He has, however, become an accomplished practical joker. His favorite altered form is still The King, and most of the Elvis sightings reported by the tabloids are really sightings of the Clone — something no one seems to have figured out yet, even

though the sighting generally occur somewhere near where the Clone is in action. He is also responsible for other manifestations — for instance, he was behind the headline, "Elvis Collector's Plate Sings 'Teddy Bear'!"

Even when he plays practical jokes, he respects the feelings of those he mimics and never does anything that would injure or embarrass them. Occasionally, however, his jokes backfire; his most spectacular mistake was when he made himself look like George Bush and started directing traffic in downtown Washington — and was immediately surrounded by over a dozen Secret Service agents!

Abilities

Clone's only native metahuman ability is that of assuming the physical form of another humanoid. Usually this means a human, but he can also mimic alien forms such as the Rynkarians (see p. 56) and the bear-like Kodiak (p. SU75).

Clone's transformations do not grant him any of the powers, skills, or memories of his "model." He does, however, gain a copy of the model's costume if he was wearing clothes himself when assuming the new form. The costume is removable, but doing so will cause it to revert to his original clothes. Since his own power cannot duplicate the metahuman abilities of others, Supertemps engineers devised some sophisticated equipment to do the job. All of the devices are sufficiently hidden so they cannot be directly targeted in combat, but each one is a sensitive instrument, and will cease to operate if sufficiently damaged.

The Vari-blaster projects an energy beam that can be altered to appear in different forms. A bolt of electricity, a jet of flame, a burst of laser light . . . all can be simulated with the Vari-blaster. Configuring the weapon's appearance is no simple task, however; it requires a successful Electronics Operation (Weapons) roll. Thus, Clone relies on Supertemps technicians to make this adjustment.

A similar skill roll can configure the weapon's hardware in such a way that it fits neatly into the stock of a rifle or under Clone's costume. (This is the Gadget Enhancement: Variable Hardware Configuration +5%.)

Clone's force field can extend from skin level to several inches away from his body. The visual shimmering can be turned on or off. This permits him to simulate many types of defenses, from a flashy force screen (visual, away from body) to thick skin (invisible, at skin level). For extra protection, Clone prefers to be wearing Kevlar body armor when changing forms, as the transformed costume retains Kevlar's protection abilities.

A miniaturized flight pack gives Clone the mobility to imitate a large number of metahumans. His speed is limited, though, and often some fast talking is required to maintain his cover.

Battle Tactics

Regardless of the form he assumes, Clone always has the same powers: a blaster, force field and limited flight. All of these will be used to best simulate a particular metahuman, even if that means scaling down the blaster power. In most cases, his best course of action is to fool the enemy as long as possible, despite the added risks.

Power Variation

750-point version: Add Alertness +2; raise Luck to Ridiculous; raise Alteration Power to 10; raise Morph skill level to 25; raise Blaster Power to 20; add Rapid Fire enhancement to Blaster skill; raise Force Field Power to 20; raise Force Field skill level to 20; add Super Flight×2 to Jet Pack; raise Acrobatics skill level to 12.

COMPACTOR

ST 11 (10 points) IQ 11 (10 points)
DX 11 (10 points) HT 13 (30 points)
Speed: 6.00 Move: 5
Damage: Death Touch 3d-2 imp; thrust 1d-1;
swing 1d+2.

Appearance: Male human, white, age 46, 5' 9", 215 lbs., partially bald, remaining hair is black with increasing gray, blue eyes, usually chomping on a stubby cigar, often needs a shave.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Charisma +2 (10 points)
Comfortable Wealth (10 points)
Luck (15 points)
Reputation +2 (10 points)
Strong Will +2 (8 points)

Disadvantages:

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
Gluttony (-5 points)
Honesty (-10 points)
Odious Personal Habit: Relentless stogie chomper (-5 points)
Overweight (-5 points)
Unattractive (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Absorption: 12d vs. Radiation (Only raises ST -2; 77 points)
Invulnerability: Generic Energy (150 points)

Power and Super-Skills:

Matter Control Power 10 (70 points)
Compress (Disintegrate)-14 (Does not actually disintegrate -1; Nuisance Effect: compressed matter is radioactive -2; Touch Only -2; 1 point)
Death Touch (Generic Impaling Missile) Power 7 (42 points)
Death Touch-14 (Armor Piercing×2 +8; Touch Only -2; 48 points)

Skills:

Bard-12 (4 points); Brawling-12 (2 points); Driving (Car)-10 (1 point); Driving (Construction equipment)-11 (2 points); Gambling-11 (2 points); Guns (Pistol)-13 (2 points); Running-11 (1 point)

Quirks:

Loves Sylvester Stallone movies — thinks *Rambo* should have won an Oscar.
Thinks hosting his own talk show would be a lot of fun
Knows nothing about computers and is proud of it
Collects decorative ashtrays
Wants to lose weight, but never diets

Story

Morris Jakowski lived a comparatively normal life for over 40 years. He grew up in Brooklyn, drove a cab for over ten years and finally got a job with the New York Department of Transportation as a heavy equipment operator.



One afternoon, while he was operating his backhoe on a highway extension project, Morris uncovered an illegally buried cache of nuclear waste. He and his rig were bathed in lethal radiation. Any normal person would have died, but Morris' Seeder genes kicked in, changing his body and saving his life. He blacked out; when he came to, men wearing lead-lined radiation suits were placing him in an ambulance.

Morris was taken, not to the hospital, but to a government testing lab at Fort Dix. Amazingly enough, even though two men almost died of radiation poisoning in their attempt to rescue him, Morris was suffering none of the effects of radiation poisoning. In fact, the radiation he was emitting had a half-life of about 15 hours. Within two weeks it had disappeared entirely.

Blood and tissue samples confirmed that Morris was indeed a metahuman, but other than the ability to survive radioactive contamination, no one (including Morris) knew what his powers were. He was subjected to a battery of tests, all designed to see how his now-metahuman body would respond to various types of stress.

Since increased strength is a common metahuman trait, Morris was given several tests to determine whether his strength had

been augmented in any way. Most of these produced no results, but when he was tested for grip strength he grabbed the lever, concentrated, and squeezed the lever into a dark lump. At the same moment, the radiation detector in the control booth went off and the testing technician's exposure badge started turning black. The technician fled the room.

Further testing revealed that Morris was able to compress any object to a fraction of its original size. The object retained its original mass, and therefore its original weight, when reduced. An unfortunate byproduct of this operation was a substantial release of radiation . . . but further tests confirmed that by touching the object, Morris could absorb the radiation with no harmful effects.

After several months the testing was completed, and Morris went back to his old job. But he also contacted Supertemps and discovered that they had been trying to get in touch with him. Both Morris and Supertemps decided that his unusual combination of powers held great promise for the problem of nuclear waste disposal.

When working for Supertemps, Morris insisted that he wear a "heroic costume," even though he was assigned to the Industrial Division. Supertemps didn't mind, and one of the secretaries there even proposed the name "Compactor." His first assignments confirmed the feasibility of commercial use of his power; he would go to a landfill or other waste site, compress the unwanted material into coin-sized slugs and absorb the attendant radiation, and then place the slugs on a pallet to be picked up later (sometimes even by himself!).

Compactor earned national attention when he tackled a barge full of trash that had been sitting in New York harbor for several months, paralyzed by bureaucratic red tape. This gained Supertemps a lot of attention and support and earned Morris a spot on a nationwide talk show. To everyone's surprise, Compactor turned out to be witty and entertaining. His years behind the wheel of a hack provided him with countless stories, and he showed a great sense of comic timing.

Morris' activities as Compactor took up more and more of his time, until he eventually had to quit his job with the Department of Transportation. He cheerfully admits it was "quit or be fired," but claims he doesn't mind — it gave him more time to work for Supertemps (which paid better) and accept invitations to be on TV shows (which were more fun). He's very happy with his role as a "working man's super" and minor celebrity. Almost everyone has heard of him, and the baggy orange jackets he prefers are today's hottest new fashion trend!

Campaign Role

Anyone who watches TV or reads popular periodicals will have heard of Morris. He splits his time between his home in New York and television appearances and Supertemps assignments all over the country (he's particularly fond of Southern California). Heroes who encounter him professionally will probably also be Industrial Division employees. Compactor wants nothing to do with the Guardian Division.

Compactor can also be used for comic relief. He doesn't take himself seriously, and when he's on a job and the television cameras are running, he sometimes keeps up a running monologue, often involving his (fictitious) ex-wife Zelda. (For example: an interviewer asked, "How do you condense things so quickly? What goes through your mind?" Morris: "Well, my ex-wife Zelda has been putting the squeeze on me for years now. I just picture her and pretend it's her turn.")

Morris realizes that his fame won't last forever (maybe his powers won't, either) so he has been investing aggressively. Most of these investments are entertainment-related — he owns

shares in several New York discos, a racetrack, a couple of casinos in Atlantic City and Las Vegas, a movie studio — and characters who frequent any of these places may see Morris there, keeping his eye on things.

And just like everyone else, Compactor needs to relax and get away from it all once in a while. He bought into his favorite investment for just this purpose — he owns two cab companies, and every so often he gets behind the wheel, both to relax by doing his favorite thing in the world and to see the look on his fares' faces when they find out there's a celebrity at the wheel!

Personality

To most people's delight, Morris is the same in person as on TV — an amiable New York cabbie. He enjoys his new life and popularity, though off-camera he lets others talk which, amazingly enough, adds to his fame as a conversationalist.

Morris isn't married, and several middle-aged (and younger) women have "popped the question" to him. His usual response is a wink and, "Aw, what wouldja wanna tie yourself down with me for? I ain't nothin' but a garbage man in a funny suit!" In truth his first two marriages ended in divorce, and two tries were enough for him.

Abilities

Compactor seems to be completely invulnerable to hostile forms of energy. Moreover, he's able to draw temporary increases in strength from hard radiation. His primary power, however, is the ability to compress inanimate objects many times over. The Compress skill is modeled after Disintegrate. Objects that are affected directly (i.e., less than ten lbs.) are shrunk down completely in one second. Larger objects are compressed as their DR and HP are destroyed as per Disintegrate. Heavier elements do not compress as much as lighter ones, but figure that most objects are compacted to roughly 1/50,000 of their original volume. A bowling ball would be compressed to about 1/4" in diameter but would still weigh 16 pounds.

Even when his strength has been boosted by the radiation, however, he's unable to move very heavy compressed objects. When it's safe, construction equipment is used to transport them.

Battle Tactics

Compactor has never been in a battle, which is just the way he likes it. It's probably just as well; Supertemps has on file reports from the metahuman institute that originally studied him that hypothesize what effect his powers would have on living tissue. It's gruesome, and Morris was never told.

Supertemps does not plan to break this secrecy, or ask Compactor to use his powers in this way — but in the event of a sufficiently devastating catastrophe, such as alien invasion, all bets are off.

Adventure Seed: Barge on the Run

Compactor is handling a routine nuclear-waste disposal job in New York. Unbeknownst to him, a team of meta-villains led by a superscientist (the GM should pick one from his campaign, or perhaps substitute TRADE (see pp. SS50-51)), have found a way to use this particular type of waste for their own nefarious ends — but only after it has been compacted by Morris!

The PCs hear about a barge hijacking over police radio, TV, from Supertemps itself, or whatever means seem most convenient. Compactor won't really consider using his power on the villains, so he is effectively at their mercy unless the characters can get there in time to save the super and his dangerous cargo!

DANCER

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 16 (80 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 7.00 Move: 8

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Female human, Oriental, age 19, 5' 9", 130 lbs., long, straight black hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Charisma +2 (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 6 or less (15 points)

Status 2 (Minor celebrity) (10 points)

Very Beautiful (25 points)

Wealthy (20 points)

Disadvantages:

Bad Sight (-10 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 9 or less (-5 points)

Enemy: Overzealous fans on 6 or less (-5 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Impulsiveness (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)

Phobia: Monsters (-15 points)

Sense of Duty: Dancer's Kids (-10 points)

Stubbornness (-5 points)

Weirdness Magnet (-15 points)

Super Advantage:

Damage Resistance +12 (No Obvious Effect +3; 78 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Matter Control Power 23 (230 points)

Animate-15 (20 points)

Control Animated Object-15 (No Concentration +2; 28 points)

Disintegrate-16 (Only to create a "statue" -1; Takes Extra Time×2 -2; 2 points)

Skills:

Acrobatics-15 (2 points); Carousing-11 (1 point); Dancing-18 (8 points); English-13 (0 points); Fast-Talk-11 (2 points); Japanese-9 (1/2 point); Judo-13 (1/2 point); Jumping-18 (4 points); Karate-17 (8 points); Performance-14 (8 points); Running-10 (1 point); Savoir-Faire-11 (1 point); Sculpting-15 (1 point)

Quirks:

Collects videotapes of old movie musicals

Always wears an ankle bracelet

Loves ice hockey; attends live games whenever she can

Flies first class whenever possible (which, with the money she is currently making, is almost all the time)

Drops in unexpectedly at elementary schools to dance and give "Just Say No" pep talks

Story

Julie Yamashita's earliest memories are of watching old Hollywood musicals with her mother. But while her mother



loved the songs and innocence, Julie idolized Cyd Charisse and Ginger Rogers. She began taking dance classes at age four.

It was clear from the beginning that Julie had genuine talent. Her parents were careful not to push but they didn't have to, as Julie was driven from within. By age ten, her teachers were saying that Julie had the drive and talent to dance professionally.

Then at age 11, Julie's father moved the family to a small, remote town in Iowa, 110 miles from the nearest dance school. Julie was heartbroken but she was not about to let isolation keep her from her dream, so she began to practice by herself.

But she missed having someone to dance with. One day she was watching an old Fred Astaire movie and saw him dancing with a hat rack! Maybe *that* was an answer! She went to the closet, got a broom and started practicing. Unfortunately, she didn't have Astaire's experience; she tried several moves, but none of them worked.

In frustration, she threw the broom against a wall. "Dance, darn you, dance!" she shouted, then closed her eyes as she tried to imagine the broom dancing. When she opened her eyes, the broom *was dancing* — just as she had imagined it!

She continued to practice her new-found talent and test its limits, but never revealed it to anyone, though she occasionally used it to the benefit of others (such as one of the less popular girls at her high school, who found to her delight that embarrassing things often happened to the "in" girls when they tormented her). She gradually learned the limitations of her powers.

She could animate normally inanimate objects, but she had to consciously control them. She thought that these were interesting talents, but really didn't see much use for them in her desired career as a dancer (except for the fact that she never had to worry about finding a partner to practice with!).

After graduation from high school, she got into an argument with her parents, who did not want her to go to New York — they feared for her safety. Julie insisted that New York was the one place where she could go to study further, and that she would be all right. In the end they reached a compromise; Julie applied to and was accepted at Iowa State University. She had three months to “make it” in New York as a dancer. If by the end of August she was not dancing professionally, she would return to Iowa and go to college.

Julie was good, and almost made the final cut several times, but her inexperience always worked against her. Several directors took her aside and told her she had talent, and in a year or so she could pick and choose her jobs — but she had less than two weeks left to prove herself.

The first thing Julie had done when she arrived in New York was sign up with Supertemps' Entertainment Division; there were few jobs that called for her particular talent, but the ones that did earned her enough money to live on and allowed her to attend tryouts. A co-worker on one of her jobs suggested an answer to her problem: at her next tryout, she danced a routine with a partner wearing an evening dress and a *Phantom of the Opera* mask. When the casting director called out, “Thank you!” she and her partner took their bows. She then ripped the mask and wig off her partner's head, showing it to be a plastic department-store mannequin who then danced a little jig by himself!

A part was hastily written specifically for Julie. The play was a flop, but she was a hit and received an offer to dance in a video the rock group Firewalker was making. The video, featuring Julie dancing with the group's instruments (including a vibraphone and the entire drum kit) was a smash — especially when fans found out that she duplicated the scene in concerts! She was dancing and famous.

But fame has its down side. After a particularly noisy party in Phoenix, a Firewalker groupie cornered Julie behind the band's hotel and asked, then insisted, that she go home with him. When she refused, he pulled a knife and pinned her against the side of the building. She looked around desperately for something that she could animate to save herself, but there was nothing to be found, not even a trash can. Nothing, that is, but *the wall of the hotel* . . .

In desperation she closed her eyes and commanded the wall to save her. As soon as she did, she heard a horrible grinding sound, followed by a metallic *clang*. When she opened her eyes, she saw her assailant frozen in fear. A brick hand had sprouted from the wall and grabbed his wrist, causing him to drop the knife.

Julie had always considered her power as a way to entertain people — never as a weapon. But this incident proved she could use it to help others as well. Besides, she missed the people at Supertemps. The Supertemps Entertainment Division didn't require its employees to belong to the Musicians' Union (of which Julie was a member), something that led to a union boycott against the division. But the union said nothing about their Guardian Division. She has volunteered to be assigned as her schedule permits, but she is trained as a *dancer*, not a crime fighter, and is not quite sure what to do.

Dancer's Kids

Julie believes that illicit drugs are the biggest danger to society today, and that drug education has to start at an early age. In fact, she has started her own program called *Dancer's Kids*. To be a Dancer's Kid, all a child has to do is send her a letter with their name and address, along with the name of their school, and write a few words or draw a picture to show what they know about the harmful effects of drugs. In return, they get a certificate, a membership button and a letter from Julie (she has a computer generate form letters from an extensive collection of boiler-plate paragraphs, so each child gets a different letter) — and their information is entered into a database. When she goes on tour or on assignment from Supertemps, she looks through the database to see which elementary schools in the area she's received letters from, and then phones ahead to schedule appointments to visit the schools. (Sometimes she chooses schools on the basis of *not* having received letters — on the assumption that the school may not have heard of the program.)

The rationale behind the *Dancer's Kids* program is that children are more responsive to a personal visit by a celebrity than to videos or classroom lectures. So far, the program has had impressive results; studies by the U.S. Department of Health indicate that schools Dancer has visited, or where significant numbers of the children are Dancer's Kids, have a much lower percentage of drug use than other schools.

Campaign Role

Player characters with a high public profile will probably meet Julie Yamashita at some point — possibly at a Firewalker concert, a special dinner or a talk show. Julie will also try to help the PCs deal with an emergency situation if she's in the area. This could make things more difficult for them, as they would have to deal with her inexperience. Because of her touring schedule and her Dancer's Kids program, it's possible that PCs could run into the Dancer just about anywhere.

Personality

Julie Yamashita is enthusiastic, bubbly and always doing something — which, unfortunately, often makes people think she's an “airhead.” When she's at work, however, whether fighting meta-villains or on stage, she is a complete professional. She becomes focused and intense, and when working with others expects them to do the same.

Abilities

Dancer is able to make inanimate objects move as if “alive.” She is also able to control them and is particularly adept at making things dance. When she animates a humanoid object, such as a statue or mannequin, it can dance with surprising grace. Indeed, from a distance it is impossible to tell it isn't a real human. Her Disintegration power only allows her to create a “statue” of some kind by visualizing something springing out of the larger object, such as a tiger leaping from a block of ice or a hand emerging from a wall.

Battle Tactics

The Dancer will rely on her Karate skill when faced with an unarmed opponent. She will kick rather than punch, often going for head shots. Julie will use her power to create instant allies when up against multiple or armed foes. She will continue to use her martial arts prowess if the enemy's numbers are limited. Otherwise, she will attempt to flee whenever it seems possible.

DEACON BLUES

ST 45 (156 points) IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 13 (30 points) HT 11 (10 points)

Speed: 6.00 Move: 7

Damage: Punch 5d-1/10d-1; Thrust 5d/10d; Swing 7d+1/12d

Appearance: Male human, white, age 27, 6' 3" (12' 6" when Grown), 180 lbs. (1,440 lbs. when Grown), black hair, blue eyes, fair complexion.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Charisma +3 (15 points)

Handsome (15 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Reputation +2 (10 points)

Voice (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Dependent: Karen Retherford on 9 or less (-12 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)

Sense of Duty: To metahumanity (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Costume (20 points)

Damage Resistance +30 (150 points)

Growth×1 (Quadruple growth rate +4; 21 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Uncontrolled Change (-10 points)

Skills:

Acting-12 (1 point); Bard-16 (8 points); Brawling-16 (8 points); Climbing-11 (½ point); Computer Operation-12 (½ point); Dancing-11 (½ point); Diplomacy-14 (6 points); Driving (Car)-11 (½ point); Ecology-13 (4 points); Fast-Talk-12 (1 point); History-11 (1 point); Judo-14 (8 points); Law-15 (8 points); Leadership-17 (4 points); Politics-16 (8 points); Psychology-10 (½ point); Riding-11 (½ point); Running-8 (½ point); Savoir-Faire-13 (1 point); Spanish-11 (½ point); Sport (Football)-12 (1 point); Stealth-12 (1 point); Tactics-10 (1 point)

Quirks:

Big "Crimson Tide" fan

Never eats red meat

Environmentalist

Loves giving interviews

Listens to Steely Dan — has worn out three cassettes of *Aja*

Story

Joe Kazanski was just another graduate student in political science at the University of Alabama, working on his master's degree and waiting to start law school in the fall when he finished his thesis. (Curiously, a lecture on particle physics was being given that day at the university by Dr. Harvey Banks;

there is a strong suspicion, but no hard evidence, that Banks was in the library area at the same time as Kazanski.) He had just typed the last three pages of his thesis, stored them on a computer disk, and left the library on his way to the University copy center when he tripped and fell, dropping the disk onto a storm sewer grate.

As he edged forward, trying to save a year's work and his ticket into law school, his fingers barely brushed the disk — which was enough to make it drop into the grate. He screamed, grabbed the grate, threw it aside and stretched as far as he could, retrieving the disk (fortunately the sewer was dry at the time). He didn't realize until he had calmed down a bit that the sewer was six feet deep, and that his legs were still on the pavement above.

When he stood up, he found he was about twice as tall as he had been before. He knew little about metahumans — just what he had read in *Time* and other magazines — and certainly never suspected he was one.



His first reaction was fear. He wanted to start his own law practice, but was afraid no one would hire a "freak"; he also saw his metahumanity as a barrier to any future political career. In desperation, he talked his situation over with his girlfriend, Karen. She convinced him that he was the same person he had always been — just a little taller sometimes. Karen also pointed out that metahuman rights was a hot topic in legal circles, and Joe was now in a perfect position to make that his legal specialty.

Together they mapped out a publicity plan. Joe patrolled the streets of nearby Tuscaloosa, doing things like helping kittens out of trees, retrieving Frisbees from rooftops and hanging Christmas decorations. Several newspapers did articles about him; one of these articles gave him his alias when it commented on his fanaticism for the University of Alabama by quoting from one of Joe's favorite Steely Dan songs: "They call Alabama the Crimson Tide, Call me Deacon Blues."

Joe's activities eventually came to the attention of Super-temps' Atlanta branch. He had never done any crime fighting, but Super-temps was impressed with his organizational abilities and offered to train him in criminology and pay his way through law school if he would take cases for them once in a while. He agreed immediately and was very happy with the arrangement. He no longer had to worry about how to pay for law school, and the assignments Super-temps gave him were a welcome diversion from his studies. They also gave him practical insight into metahuman affairs. In fact, after he graduated from law school he stayed on for an additional year, both to take post-graduate classes and to teach a well-received class on "The Metahuman and the Law."

Deacon Blues is nominally the leader of the Birmingham Defense Team, but these days he only spends about two days a week in the field — not even that, if he's trying an important case. He also commutes around the country giving one-day seminars on "Metahumans, Super Powers and the Law." In fact, there's only one loose end in his life these days, and if Karen has anything to say about it, that particular knot will be tied as soon as she can get Joe to stand still long enough to say, "I do."

Karen Retherford

23 years old, brown hair, brown eyes, fair, 5' 4", 120 lbs.

ST 10, DX 10, IQ 11, HT 12.

Basic speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

Advantages: Attractive; Language Talent +1; Musical Ability +1.

Disadvantages: Bad Sight; Claustrophobia.

Skills: Acting-12; Computer Operation-11; Driving (Car)-11; Fast-Talk-12; French-12; Musical Instrument (Guitar)-12; Musical Instrument (Piano)-15; Politics-10; Psychology-13; Singing-12; Tactics-11.

Karen is a senior, majoring in music. She met Joe Kazanski in a psychology class when she was a freshman and he was a senior; as she puts it, "I chased him all through that class until he finally caught me." They have been together ever since, but decided to postpone getting married until he could finish law school and she got her bachelor's degree. When Joe found out he was a metahuman, that set their marriage back even farther. They have both since come to terms with his powers, and plan to be married soon, but they don't know whether Joe's metahuman genes would be passed on to their children.

Joe's political ambitions are fine with Karen; in fact, she has ambitions of her own — to be a senator's wife and Georgetown hostess. (They think the White House would be a great place to live, but both figure, "One step at a time.")

She understands how important Joe's political ambitions are to him and is willing to help him attain them. She has been his strategist in all of his campaigns, from being elected president of the University Council to his drive to be accepted as a metahuman, and may have a future in her own right as a campaign manager.

Campaign Role

Deacon Blues is a well-known super and a staunch defender of metahuman rights. He travels extensively and could be involved in any scenario where a metahuman, villain or hero, was being treated unjustly. If one of the PCs were to go on trial for a case involving use of their metahuman powers, Super-temps might send Deacon Blues to assist the PC's own lawyers.

He is also an advocate of humane treatment of animals. If the PCs are involved in an animal-rights issue, Deacon Blues might be involved as well or could easily be approached for help.

The Deacon will not normally get involved in any case not involving one of the above subjects (unless he feels that it is a politically "right" move).

Personality

Deacon Blues is a typical leader-type super — kind, courteous, concerned for the welfare of others rather than himself, and he drinks lots of milk. But part of his personality is very unlike the image that he portrays. Joe Kazanski is very ambitious; he wants to be a major political figure in this country and many of the things he does are means to that end. He sometimes stops himself from doing what he instinctively feels is right and instead tries to do what he thinks the *public* would want him to do.

Joe is a very intense person; the only time he really relaxes is when he's with Karen — not often enough for either of them!

Abilities

In addition to his non-super abilities as an effective leader and public speaker, Deacon Blues possesses the ability to grow at will. At his current level of power, he can double his original height. Even in his normal state, he has tremendous strength and is capable of sustaining a great deal of damage, but when he grows to his full height his ST and damage increase dramatically — for damage, use the number after the slash when grown.

Battle Tactics

Deacon Blues likes to take charge. In team combat he will deploy members of his team against the opponents they seem to be the most effective against, usually going up against other bricks himself (though he is not afraid to mix it up with other types of villains). He uses his great strength sparingly when he first enters combat, for fear of harming others and to see what his opponent is capable of. If things are not going well, he will try to surprise his opponent with a judo throw, but he keeps this as a last resort.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower ST to 25; lower DX to 12; lower HT to 10; lower Damage Resistance to +10; lower Appearance to Attractive; drop Patron; drop Voice; drop Costume; lower Brawling skill level to 15; drop Judo skill; lower Leadership skill level to 15.

750-point version: Raise ST to 60; raise DX to 14; raise HT to 12; raise Damage Resistance to +35; add two more levels of Growth; raise Brawling skill level to 20.

FTL

ST 32 (130 points) IQ 10 (0 points)
DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)
Speed: 6.00 Move: 6 (12 flying,
3072 in overdrive)

Damage: Thrust 3d+1; Swing 6d-1

Appearance: Female human, white, age 30, 5' 8", 145 lbs., reddish-brown hair, green eyes, fair complexion.

Point Total: 600

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)
Acute Hearing +10 (20 points)
Alertness +2 (10 points)
Attractive (5 points)
Comfortable Wealth (10 points)
Night Vision (10 points)
Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Compulsive Behavior: Eavesdropping (-10 points)
Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
Enemy: Various villains on 9 or less (-30 points)
Impulsiveness (-10 points)
Reputation: Troublemaker, -1 from anyone who's heard of her (-5 points)
Secret: Identity (-5 points)
Truthfulness (-5 points)
Weirdness Magnet (-15 points)

Super Advantages:

Damage Resistance +20 (Switchable +1; Only when flying -2; 90 points)
Damage Resistance +5 vs. Air (Switchable +1; Only when flying -2; 140 points)
Flight (40 points)
Super Flight×8 (Must get a full night's sleep after each use -3; 112 points)
Telescopic Vision×7 (42 points)

Skills:

Administration-11 (4 points); Area Knowledge (Chicago)-11 (2 points); Area Knowledge (Los Angeles)-11 (2 points); Area Knowledge (New York City)-11 (2 points); Area Knowledge (USA)-14 (8 points); Guns (.44)-13 (2 points); Lip Reading-10 (2 points); Navigation-12 (8 points); Stealth-11 (1 point)

Quirks:

Won't pry into written material, only conversations
Always fixes her hair after landing
Likes to "buzz" the Great Plains
Prefers hotels with waterbeds
Always orders room service

Story

Florence Lindham was born with an incredible curiosity about what other people were saying.

No one knows what fueled this curiosity; it certainly wasn't paranoia or spitefulness, and Florence never revealed anything



she heard, or even tried to use the information. She just liked to know what other people were saying.

This compulsion persisted throughout childhood, despite her parents' attempts to break her of it. It got Florence into trouble many times, both at home and at school. One problem was that she often gave herself away; she had great ears, and could listen from a fair distance, but she would often sneeze, knock something over or do something else to reveal herself.

Florence was otherwise a well-behaved, likable girl. She had a few friends who realized she kept everything she heard secret, but most of the kids didn't like the way she would hover on the edge of private conversations. No one could understand why she did this; they assumed she was gathering information for some reason or another. Early in life, she picked up the nickname "Snoopy," and to this day she hates it.

Once in a while, she was able to use her habit to her advantage, such as when she heard (from across the street) someone say the company he was working for was looking for new secretaries. She applied for and got one of the jobs. Her first day on the job, she was just getting ready to leave, when she noticed four men entering a vice president's office. The fact that it was

late and the men looked out of place only served to pique her curiosity.

So Florence listened through the VP's door and heard far more than the idle chatter and business talk she had expected. The four men were notorious metahumans (including Chemico, see p. SU72), and the VP was hiring them to murder a rival!

As the group got down to specifics, Florence leaned in closer and hit her head against the door. She turned and ran as fast as she could, but one of the criminals could fly and took off after her. She made it to the stairs, but was on the tenth floor. In desperation, when she heard the stairway open above her, she decided to leap over the railing to the next landing. But to her surprise, when she jumped she fell *up*!

Florence continued to fly up through the middle of the staircase, past her startled pursuer. She had no idea what was happening, but didn't take time to worry about it. Her pursuer regained his composure and chased Florence to the roof. Once out in the open she could only think to will herself to fly *fast*. And she did, leaving the criminal and the city behind in a matter of seconds. When the adrenaline rush left her and she had to slow down and land, Florence found herself in the next state.

She was tired and hungry and was only carrying \$20, but she knew she had to do two things; she had to foil the murder plot, and she had to get home. She called the executive's company and told them about the plot (she called a toll-free number from a pay phone and didn't give them time to trace the call), then started flying. She didn't fly nearly as fast as she had the night before, however, and concluded she would only be able to match her earlier speed when she was rested and unfatigued. So she stopped in the nearest big city and took a bus the rest of the way.

When she got home the next day, the newspaper headlines screamed that two meta-villains had been caught red-handed in the murder attempt, thanks to an anonymous tip. The meta-villain who tried to capture her never told anyone what had happened, mainly because he didn't want anyone to know how badly he had been shown up, but he privately vowed to come back to get her.

After she returned home, Florence did her best to lead a normal life while testing the limits of her powers. She found that she had attained great physical strength and that her eyesight was now almost as good as her hearing. She decided one day that she had to be even more careful about her activities, when she absent-mindedly lifted up a desk to search for her pencil (luckily, no one noticed).

Then one night when she was working late, Florence went to take a break and found one of the mail clerks with his head in his arms. She sat down next to him and got him to talk; he had promised to send a package out via next-day service for the company president. It was very important, it had to be on the other side of the country by morning and he was probably going to lose his job because he'd forgotten to send it.

Florence offered to take care of the package on two conditions; he was not to ask her how she did it and she wanted him to take her out to dinner at an Italian restaurant. Considering that it would save his job, she explained, it was pretty inexpensive.

Three hours later Florence arrived at the target city. She spent the night at a motel, then delivered the package first thing in the morning. Finally, she flew back and worked the last half of the day, claiming to have been sick that morning.

The next week Florence registered with Supertemps. They had some question about whether her power was marketable, but once it was advertised, it seemed obvious. She was immediately deluged with work.

Only one problem remained; Florence needed to find a code name. She briefly considered names like Mercury and Gossip (because "nothing travels faster") but finally settled on FTL. She tells everyone the initials stand for Faster Than Light, but she *really* chose them because they're her initials. So far, no one has caught on.

Campaign Role

If the player characters are to receive sensitive items from Supertemps, chances are FTL will be the courier. She would be likely to carry small gadgets or information too hot to be trusted to conventional communications channels.

FTL's Unluckiness and Weirdness Magnet disadvantages represent her uncanny ability to overhear nefarious plots and then get spotted doing so. Having this happen when the PCs are nearby could be the spark for a comic-relief or change-of-pace adventure.

Personality

Florence Lindham is an upbeat, forthright person. She speaks her mind honestly, but avoids open criticism of others. She believes in the adage, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." Her most peculiar trait, almost an obsession, is her need to know what others are saying. She knows that eavesdropping is considered rude, but she can't help herself, and justifies her actions by saying that it's all right as long as she doesn't use or react to what she hears. She is extremely good at keeping a secret, and will only divulge what she overhears under torture or other extreme pressure.

Abilities

FTL's primary ability is Flight. She can fly around 25 mph at will, with no limitations on use, or she can go into an "overdrive" mode which will allow her to fly at several times the speed of sound, but which is very fatiguing. Once she turns it off, she can't use it again without getting a good night's sleep first. When flying, she is surrounded by a force field which allows her to breathe and otherwise withstand the tremendous pressure and temperature encountered at such high speed. (This also allows her to fly high enough above the ground so that sonic booms are not a problem.) Her reaction time is also boosted, so she can fly at a low level without fear of slamming into a mountain. Telescopic vision also helps in this regard.

Battle Tactics

Florence has no real combat training, so what she does in a fight depends on the situation. Usually, she'll try to fly away. If she is able to use her Super Flight she will leave most attackers behind in a second or two; otherwise she will go as fast as she can to the local super-team or police.

Supertemps required FTL to learn to shoot a pistol, and to carry one at all times while on duty. She has never yet fired it in combat, and if forced to fight will have to make a Will roll to shoot at anyone. Otherwise, she will just punch and kick at random.

Power Variation

250-point version: Lower ST to 15; lower HT to 10; lower Acute Hearing to +5; drop Alertness; lower Patron to appearing on 9 or less; lower Damage Resistance to +10; drop Damage Resistance vs. Air; lower Super Flight to $\times 5$; lower Telescopic Vision to $\times 3$.

Truly Amazing Metahero Investigations, Inc.

Harold Potter

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 14 (45 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 10 (0 points)

Speed: 5.50 Move: 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Male human, white, age 27, 5' 10", 170 lbs.,
brown hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 100

Advantage:

Wealthy (20 points)

Disadvantages:

Dependent: Chloe Vanderlan on 9 or less (-24 points)

Weirdness Magnet (-15 points)

Skills:

Accounting-12 (1 point); Administration-12 (1/2 point);
Brawling-12 (1 point); Computer Operation-15 (2 points);
Criminology-16 (6 points); Detect Lies-14 (4 points); First Aid-
15 (2 points); Guns (Pistol)-14 (1 point); History-13 (2 points);
Hobby (Comic books)-13 (1 point); Hobby (Movies)-13 (1
point); Hobby (Television)-14 (2 points); Holdout-16 (6
points); Law-14 (4 points); Literature-12 (1 point); Lockpick-
ing-14 (2 points); Merchant-14 (2 points); Occultism-12 (1/2
point); Research-15 (4 points); Shadowing-14 (2 points); Street-
wise-14 (2 points)

Quirks:

Sleepwalker

Voracious reader

Idolizes supers



BLOCKBUSTER

ST 65 (196 points) IQ 11 (10 points)

DX 13 (30 points) HT 14 (45 points)

Speed: 6.75 Move: 8

Damage: Punch 7d; Thrust 7d + 1; Swing 9d + 2

Appearance: Male human, white, indeterminate age, 6' 6",
320 lbs., bald, gray eyes (no pupils), his whole body is the color
of wet cement.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Night Vision (10 points)

Disadvantages:

- Bad Temper (-10 points)
- Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
- Dependent: Chloe Vanderlan on 9 or less (-12 points)
- Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
- Enemy: Local street gang on 6 or less (-10 points)
- Intolerance: Big-city folks (-5 points)
- Overconfidence (-10 points)
- Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)
- Secret: Identity (-10 points)
- Stubbornness (-5 points)
- Vow: Never harm a woman (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

- Body of Stone×12 (72 points)
- Costume (20 points)
- Damage Resistance +15 (75 points)
- Damage Resistance +4 vs. Crushing (16 points)
- Transformation (60 points)

Skills:

Brawling-15 (4 points); Driving (18 wheeler)-12 (1 point); Driving (Car)-13 (2 points); Driving (Construction equipment)-11 (½ point); First Aid-12 (2 points); French-9 (½ point); Leadership-16 (2 points); Mechanic-13 (6 points); Running-11 (½ point); Singing-13 (½ point); Tactics-10 (2 points)

Quirks:

- Chews tobacco
- Has a Cajun accent
- Curses in French when angry

HEAVY NOVA

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 10 (0 points)
DX 16 (80 points) HT 12 (20 points)
Speed: 7.00 Move: 8 (64 flying)
Damage: Nova Burst 10d+1; Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d
Appearance: Male human, age 26, 6' 4", 190 lbs., short blond hair, blue eyes, tan complexion.
Point Total: 500

Advantages:

- Combat Reflexes (15 points)
- Handsome (15 points)
- Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)
- Voice (10 points)

Disadvantages:

- Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
- Compulsive Behavior: Carousing (-5 points)
- Dependent: Chloe Vanderlan on 9 or less (-6 points)
- Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
- Intolerance: Authority figures (-5 points)
- Lecherousness (-15 points)
- Overconfidence (-10 points)
- Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)
- Phobia (Mild): Claustrophobia (-15 points)
- Secret: Identity (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

- Costume (20 points)
- Damage Resistance +20 (Switchable +1; Physical Effect: Blue glow -1; 100 points)
- Flight (40 points)
- Super Flight×2 (40 points)
- Transformation (60 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

- Nova Burst Power 16 (Generic Crushing Missile, 96 points)
- Nova Burst-18 (No Concentration +2; Rapid Fire +3; 40 points)
- Light Power 2 (8 points)
- Flash-10 (No Concentration +2; Selective Effect +4; 12 points)

Skills:

Acrobatics-14 (1 point); Acting-11 (4 points); Bard-12 (2 points); Carousing-12 (2 points); Dancing-15 (1 point); Fast-Talk-10 (2 points); Judo-14 (1 point); Running-9 (½ point); Savoir-Faire-11 (½ point); Sex Appeal-13 (4 points); Singing-11 (½ point); Stealth-14 (½ point)

Quirks:

- Showoff
- Loves to give interviews
- Doesn't drink
- Calls women "babes"

Story

Ever since he was a little boy, Harold Potter wanted to be a metahero. He would sit in his room at home, daydreaming of being big and strong, stopping dangerous criminals. Unfortunately for Harold, his dreams seemed impossible. So instead, he set out to become the next best thing — a policeman.

But becoming a policeman was not as easy as Harold had imagined. At least, it wasn't as easy as it appeared on television. He was in poor shape, and only barely managed to pass the physical just to enter the academy. Weeks of arduous training followed, but somehow Harold managed to persevere. Finally, all his hard work was rewarded, and Harold graduated. He was at the bottom of his class, but he graduated.

Then things *really* got difficult. Harold and his new partner, Chuck, were assigned to patrol one of the most dangerous areas of Hollywood. On their first night out, they were sent to investigate a break-in at a hardware store.

Two of the punks ran as soon as Harold and Chuck arrived, but the third pulled a gun. During the ensuing mayhem, Harold was shot and seriously injured. Chuck collared the gunman, but the others escaped.

Harold was placed in the hospital, where he recuperated for several weeks. After his release, Harold's insurance company informed him that he was entitled to a large cash settlement as restitution for his injuries. He took the money and did what any sane man would do under the circumstances — he resigned from the force and used the money to set up his own private detective agency.

Business was slow in the beginning. Somehow, neither the radio spots nor the ad in the phone book brought in cases. Harold blamed this on the business' name — Harold Potter, Private Investigations was just boring. He was about to change it when his first client walked in.

Chloe Vanderlan was an out-of-work actress who picked Harold because his rates were the lowest in town. She asked Harold if he would track down her ex-husband, who owed her a lot of back alimony. Harold accepted the case and went to work, but finding Chloe's ex-husband turned out to be more difficult than Harold had originally thought. After three months, Harold still had no definite leads.

Instead of feeling disappointed, though, he found that he didn't mind at all. During the course of the case, he had become quite fond of Chloe. Their regular meetings were the highlight of his week, even if he had nothing to report. Thus, he was crushed when Chloe called him to say that her ex-husband had just sent her back alimony; Harold's services would no longer be required.

Harold was unhappy, but took it in stride. There would be more clients in the future; all he had to do was wait. And wait. And wait.

Business had slowed to a standstill. To keep himself occupied, and to keep his mind off of Chloe, Harold read comic books or watched television in his office. Soon, he once again began dreaming of being a metahero.

Initially his dreams were vague — the kind where he'd wake up and never remember what it was he'd dreamed. Then they became more vivid. He dreamt that he was a large man of stone; he went back to the hardware store and pummeled the street gang that nearly killed him months before.

The next day Harold was reading the newspaper; he barely noticed a two-paragraph report stating that two members of a street gang had been hospitalized after being assaulted by an unknown assailant.

That evening, he had another dream. This time, he was a handsome, dashing young man flying about the cityscape. He swooped in and out of alleyways, between buildings, and buzzed the observation decks of local restaurants. At one point in the dream, he noticed a building on fire, so he flew over to investigate.

Upon reaching the building, he saw that the local firemen had the situation well in hand, and started to fly away. But then he noticed a girl trapped on the fifth floor. Without a further thought, he swooped down and snatched the young lady from her impending doom.

Again, when Harold awoke, his only thoughts were of how exciting his dream was last night, and how he wished *he* could be a hero! But that night the local news described a scene almost exactly like the one in his dream, Harold knew that something strange was happening.

The answer suddenly hit him — Harold realized he had the ability to predict the future. Apparently it only worked when he was sleeping, so he needed to test his new-found power, with a witness. Rushing to the phone, Harold called Chloe and asked her to meet him at his office. When she arrived, Harold tried to explain the strange events that had occurred. Chloe was understandably skeptical, but when he pleaded with her and offered to show her proof, she agreed to stay.

Harold sat her on a chair next to his bed, explaining that he could only predict the future when he was dreaming. Chloe burst out laughing. She'd heard a lot of lines before, but *this* had to be the looniest! But Harold promised her that he was very serious, so she decided to wait and see.

Harold then lay down on the bed and closed his eyes. When nothing had happened after a half hour, Chloe decided she'd had enough. She got up to go, but before she could get to the door she heard a gruff Cajun voice call her name and tell her to wait. She turned around and Harold wasn't on the bed any more! Standing next to the bed was a tall man with the complexion of

wet cement. He was dressed in black, chomping a cigar and wiggling his eyebrows at her.

Chloe panicked and began screaming at the top of her lungs. Against her better judgment, she picked up the chair and swung it at the intruder. It broke against his raised arm. He grabbed her by the arms and held her. She tried to break loose, but he was much too strong.

As she struggled, his features started to blur and he began to shrink. When he released her, she stepped back and watched as his whole body began to change into that of Harold Potter. Chloe did the only thing that seemed to make sense at the moment; she fainted.

Harold revived her and asked her to describe what had just happened. As she told him, he began to realize that he wasn't predicting the future at all. Instead, somehow he was able to transform himself into two separate metahumans!

This was his big chance. Now Harold could finally do all those heroic deeds of which he had always dreamed. But first, he needed to learn how to control the change. If nothing else, he had to make sure he wouldn't revert to his vulnerable human form at an inopportune time!

After several days of practice he became able to consciously control the change, but it required a lot of energy. Figuring out how to select which super he'd become was trickier, but he eventually mastered the technique.

Before he was ready for action, Harold had another problem to deal with. Occasionally, when Harold was in one of his other forms, he found that form taking actions that Harold did not approve of. When he tried to stop himself, he found that he was unable, with one important exception: he was always able to force either Blockbuster or Heavy Nova to change back to his original form.

Harold came to realize that each of his forms was a completely separate identity. When he was in one form, the other two were passive observers, with no influence on the host form. The sole exception must have something to do with the fact that Harold Potter was the "original" form.

Harold was not pleased with this discovery, to say the least. Without any appreciable control of the others' actions, they might do things that he'd regret. Property damage was his primary concern . . . neither Blockbuster nor Heavy Nova exhibited much restraint.

So a fear of expensive lawsuits drove Harold to contact Super Temps. He offered the services of Blockbuster and Heavy Nova to the Guardian Division, setting himself up as their manager. He now can continue to play super without having to worry (much) what his "alternate selves" are going to do to get him into trouble.

To keep the detective agency alive, Harold changed its name to something more memorable. Today, "Truly Amazing Metahero Investigations, Inc." (TAMI for short) has more clients than Harold will ever need. And what with spending quality time with Chloe and booking Heavy Nova for interviews and talk shows, he no longer has much time for daydreaming.

Campaign Roles

As the premiere detective agency specializing in metahuman cases, Harold may be approached by player characters in need of his services. His transformations into Blockbuster and Heavy Nova are common knowledge, but a client still might be surprised to find a stone man sitting behind the desk.

In his Heavy Nova form, a good method of introducing him to the PCs would be to have Nova fly in during a battle in which the characters are struggling. He would swoop down, explain

loudly how he was here to save the day, then join in on the good-guys' side.

As Blockbuster, he would be more likely to run into the characters in a non-combat situation — just hanging out at bar or taking a walk through the park.

Personalities

Harold Potter and his alter egos are a unique case. Each of the personalities presented above considers himself to be a separate and distinct individual. When one identity is speaking, he always refers to himself in the first person, the others in the third.

Harold Potter is a nice guy with a very optimistic outlook on life. He now has everything he has ever wanted: a beautiful girlfriend, a successful business, and the ability to become a metahero. At times, he seems a little overwhelmed with it all and his idealism could be mistaken for naivete, but he is usually able to get his act together and respond to the situation at hand.

Blockbuster is big and tough and he knows it. He's never concerned for his own safety, only the safety of others. But his sternness is just a facade, and he is basically a "good ol' boy" at heart. He genuinely likes Harold and knows how he feels about Chloe, so is very protective of her.

Heavy Nova is a fast-talking, high-flying bundle of energy. He will do anything as long as it gets him in the spotlight. He craves attention and female companionship, living life in the fast lane. He is supremely overconfident and has been known to do some very stupid things. This aside, he is a dedicated hero — he will protect the innocent, etc. He'll just make sure that he gets good press coverage while doing so.

Heavy Nova doesn't care much about Harold and considers Chloe to be something of an annoyance — but he would still help her if she were ever in danger.

Abilities

Harold possesses the ability to transform himself into either of two separate metaheroes. The mechanism by which the trans-

formation takes place is not known; he might physically transform, or his body could be transported to another plane while one of the metahumans takes his place.

Blockbuster, very simply, is a classic brick, with rock-hard skin and great strength. There are very few things that can actually hurt him — a fact he takes advantage of.

Heavy Nova has the ability to project blasts of lethal or blinding blue energy from his hands. He flies very fast and is protected by a glowing force field.

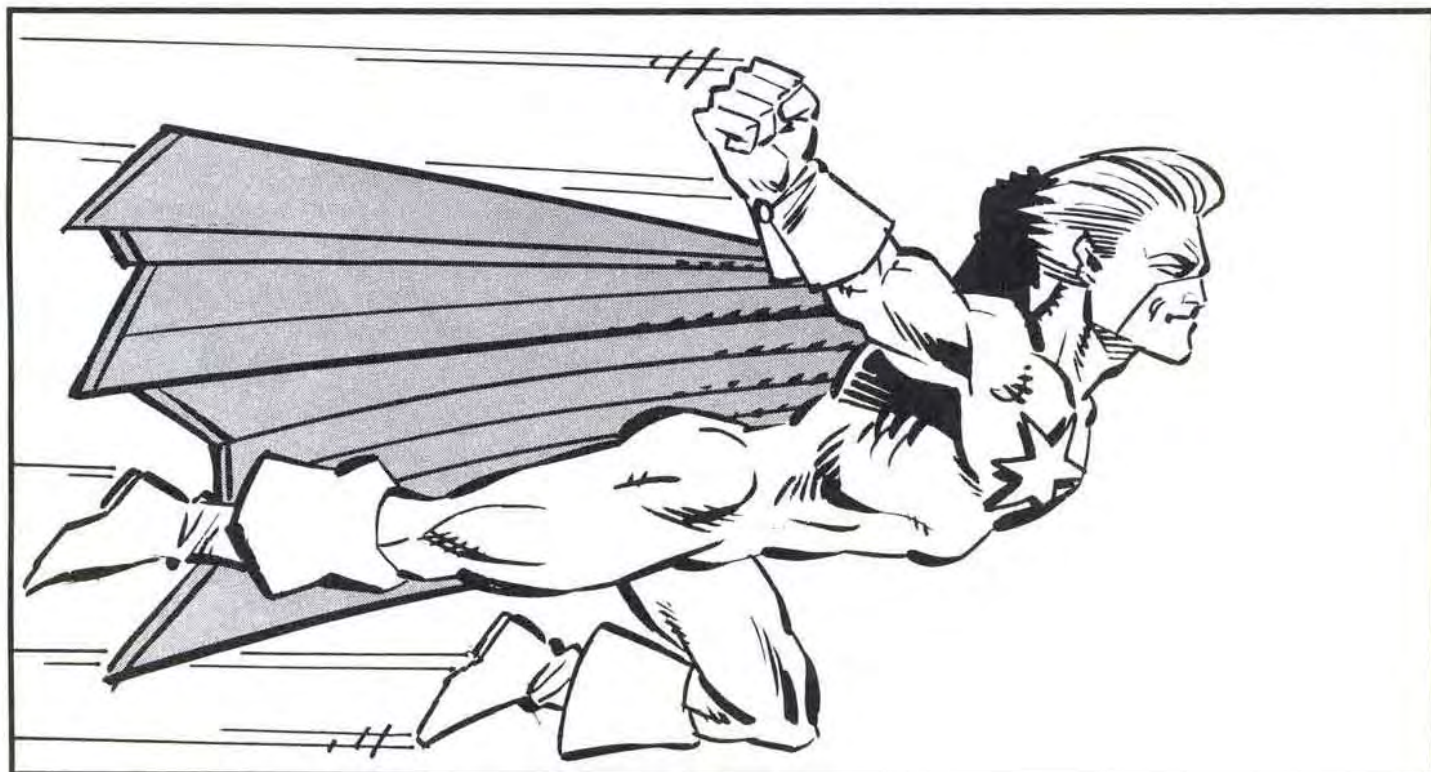
Battle Tactics

When it becomes obvious that combat is about to ensue, Harold will examine the situation, then transform himself into whichever of the two supers he feels is best suited for the task at hand. If either would suffice, he will opt to change into Blockbuster, as he is the more level-headed of the two.

Blockbuster prefers to survey the scene before fighting. His first action will be to make sure that any bystanders are safe. He will then close to fight with the nearest foe and start pounding away. No surprises from this guy. He just loves to go toe-to-toe with anyone who looks like they can take it.

Heavy Nova's first action is to make sure that everybody is watching him. If he isn't the center of attention, he'll launch into a grandiose monologue about how he is going to vanquish the evildoers in the name of truth, justice and the American way. He prefers to fight an aerial battle, so he will fly up to a good vantage point. If anyone closes within range, he will set off a flash and then lay into them with his Nova Burst.

Were Harold ever to get in a combat situation and, for some reason, not be able to transform, his police training would take over. Sure, he wasn't the world's greatest cop, but he knows the basics of what to do (and not to do) in a combat better than most people. He doesn't normally carry a gun, but if he even once finds that he has an enemy with the ability to squelch his transformation, he will immediately begin carrying the biggest handgun he can find (he already has a concealed weapon permit, he just doesn't use it much).



New Javelin

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 13 (30 points)
 DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 6.00 Move: 7 (40 flying)
 Damage: Blaster 7d cut; Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d
 Appearance: Female human, Hispanic, age 29, 5' 4", 110
 lbs., long brown hair, brown eyes, fair complexion.
 Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Acute Taste & Smell +1 (2 points)
 Attractive (5 points)
 Eidetic Memory (30 points)
 High Pain Threshold (10 points)
 Mathematical Ability (10 points)
 Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Addiction: Smoker (-5 points)
 Alcoholism (-15 points)
 Bad Sight: Wears contacts (-10 points)
 Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
 Enemy: Blue Demon (p. SU71) on 9 or less (-20 points)
 Overconfidence (-10 points)
 Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)
 Secret: Identity (-10 points)

Super Advantage:

Gadeteer (25 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Vulnerability: 1d from Sonic attacks (-10 points)

Super Equipment:

Bracers (Breakable, Unrepairable DR 30, HP 20 -20%; Can Be Hit at -6 -5%; 108 points)
 Blaster Power 14 (Generic Cutting Missile)
 Blaster-16 (No Concentration +2; Rapid Fire +3; Wall -3)
 Bodysuit (no modifiers; 110 points)
 Damage Resistance +10
 Damage Resistance +15 vs. generic Energy
 Flight Pack (Breakable DR 15, HP 75 -15%; Can Be Hit at -4 -15%; 50 points)
 Flight (Requires air -1)
 Super Flight x2 (Requires air -1)
 Force Ring Generator (Breakable: DR 15, HP 30 -15%; Can Be Hit at -8 -5%; 42 points)
 Force Rings Power 5 (Generic Binding Attack)
 Force Rings-16
 Life Support Augmenter (Breakable DR 15, HP 75 -15%; Can Be Hit at -4 -15%; 18 points)
 Regeneration: Regular
 Sensor Helmet (Breakable: DR 10, HP 15 -15%; Unreliable: Activation 13 -5%; 61 points)
 Nature Power 2
 Sense Animal-16 (Also detects humans +2)
 Sense Fish-16



Skills:

Area Knowledge (New York City)-13 (1/2 point); Armoury (Body armor)-15 (3 points); Battlesuit-14 (2 points); Brawling-12 (1 point); Computer Operation-13 (1/2 point); Computer Programming-13 (2 points); Electronics (Medical)-14 (3 points); Electronics (Sensors)-15 (4 points); Electronics (Weapons)-15 (4 points); English-13 (0 points); Fast-Talk-14 (2 points); First Aid-14 (1 point); Guns (Revolver)-14 (1 point); Mathematics-13 (2 points); Physics-13 (2 points); Research-14 (2 points); Running-9 (1/2 point); Shadowing-13 (1 point); Spanish-12 (1/2 point); Stealth-12 (2 points)

Quirks:

Keeps a small bottle of club soda in her purse
 Doesn't plan to quit smoking until after alcoholism has been licked
 Likes movies, but doesn't go to many
 Steers clear of the Empire State Building
 Always loses her disposable lighters

Story

All of New York and most of America knew the Javelin as the dashing, flamboyant metahero who defended the streets of the Big Apple with deadly karate kicks and yellow lightning bolts thrown from his hands. Behind the thin, black domino mask, Serafin Espinosa was a show-off who enjoyed the attention the

media gave him. And the press was quick to cash in on the hero that gave them such eye-grabbing headlines.

But no one knew that the Javelin had a child. Espinosa had entertained dreams of a boy who would also exhibit control over electricity, and as father and son they would strike terror in the hearts of evil-doers and receive the praise of those they defended. Instead, he had a daughter who had not a single meta-human gene. His disappointment was obvious to Barbara, who tried (to no avail) to gain her father's attention.

When she graduated from high school, Barbara Espinosa used her father's considerable wealth to attend Oxford. Later she returned to America, obtaining master's degrees in engineering and computer science.

Instead of getting a job right away Barbara returned to New York; she wanted to give her father one last chance to get it right. They talked for a while and seemed to be on the right track, but just as they seemed to be making progress he received a call for help. Before he left, he hugged and kissed Barbara, something he hadn't done in years. He simply explained that he had a bad feeling about this assignment.

Barbara turned on the television after he'd gone, flipping through the channels until she found one covering the appearance of Blue Demon (p. SU71) near the Empire State Building. She tuned in just in time to see Javelin arrive.

He was outmatched, so he harassed the monster while waiting for other metaheroes to arrive. Blue Demon crashed through a window and came back out with a woman in its claws. Javelin couldn't wait any longer; he took on Blue Demon by himself. The battle was quick and decisive; as America watched, transfixed to the screen, Javelin's broken body was hurled to the ground some 450 feet below. Then the abomination killed the woman and flew away into the night.

The next day the entire nation mourned. Flags were flown at half-mast, and the city of New York held a memorial ceremony for their fallen hero, which Barbara attended anonymously. The Mayor made a stirring speech, at one point asking who would rise to take Javelin's place.

Though she had never entertained such thoughts before, Barbara suddenly decided that person would be *her*. Javelin's will left the majority of his estate to Barbara. She used the money to finance a sophisticated lab in the basement of her father's Park Avenue home, where she began researching and developing super-equipment.

When she was finally ready, Barbara became New Javelin. But she kept her true identity as secret as her father's, and was careful not to reveal her relation to the deceased hero. The New Javelin was moderately successful, but the work took its toll on Barbara. Unable to deal with the stress of being a "hero," she started smoking and drinking.

Barbara realized the downward spiral she was in, and in an effort to regain some structure in her life, she joined Super-temps. The company had some doubts about her psychological stability, so they assigned her to a Defense Squad led by the Apparition (see p. 12); a squad sometimes called the Mother Goose Patrol.

The drinking problem came to light quickly, but Apparition held off — she knew something was behind New Javelin's self-destructive behavior. The restraint paid off; one night the grief just spilled out of her and she told Apparition everything, including her identity as Javelin's daughter. As Barbara cried, Apparition promised the Mother Goose Squad would do everything they could to destroy Blue Demon *if* Barbara would seek help through Alcoholics Anonymous. With the help of A.A., Barbara is slowly recovering, but it's still a daily struggle.

Campaign Role

Barbara Espinosa met some people here and there while in school, but doesn't keep in touch with them any more. It's much more likely that characters will be familiar with New Javelin and they'll remember the evening when the original Javelin died.

Alcoholic characters could be in the same A.A. chapter as Barbara. In fact, a character that has recovered from the dependency may be her partner, responsible for helping her through difficult times.

Personality

The many years of neglect by her father left Barbara introspective and secretive. She doesn't find making new friends, or communicating with old ones, easy. She is aware of and embarrassed by this, however, and is trying to change, but she'll always be slow to trust others.

It's hard to hide a drinking problem, but Barbara made a valiant attempt. The counseling she's getting through A.A. requires her to acknowledge her problem, something she finds difficult.

Barbara is an attractive, single woman, but hasn't dated much. Barbara has been more interested in some companionship recently and occasionally goes to museums, libraries and the theater — anywhere she might meet an interesting, stimulating man — that isn't a bar.

Abilities

Barbara Espinosa possesses none of the fantastic abilities of her late father, but she more than makes up for this by her sheer brilliance as an engineer.

The sleek unit worn high on her back houses three compact air-breathing engines that propel Javelin through the air. The sophisticated sensors mounted in the helmet can detect animal life of any form within three miles. Her suit contains a mechanism that will inject chemicals to quickly rebuild tissue or regenerate blood.

Behind the lightning bolt emblem lies a complex energy manipulator that produces enclosing rings of force. If successfully "applied" to an opponent, the victim is held unless he's strong enough to break the energy bonds. The rings themselves dissipate after ten seconds.

On each wrist Javelin wears shiny bracers. These are the most recognizable of her devices, owing to the fact that they see the most use. Each fires a beam of destructive energy. (When using Rapid Fire each hand fires once, at the same skill level. This is a special effect.) Unlike most beamed weapons, these can be held for about a second, creating a wall of damaging energy.

Battle Tactics

Javelin is most effective against grounded targets, at the same time being (usually) most threatened by them. Consequently, she tends to fly during battles, remaining close enough to the ground that she can still hit her foes.

The force rings are not strong enough to restrain burly villains, so she uses them against unenhanced opponents, especially those that aren't quick enough to dodge them regularly. Typically this means psis and some blasters. On the other hand, if a martial artist has been momentarily stunned, the force rings are a very effective attack.

When not discharging the force rings, Javelin commonly fires each of her wrist blasters at every available moment. One blast is enough to stagger most enemies, but some need a double dose. Javelin plays it safe by firing both at all times. This increases her odds that one beam will hit.

KALKIN

ST 9 (-10 points) IQ 18 (125 points)
 DX 11 (10 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 5.75 Move: 5 (3 Levitating)

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Female human, East Indian, age 24, 5' 4", 90 lbs., black hair, brown eyes, wears traditional Hindu clothing.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Beautiful (15 points)
 Danger Sense (15 points)
 Intuition (15 points)
 Lightning Calculator (5 points)
 Mathematical Ability (10 points)
 Musical Ability +4 (4 points)
 Patron: Supertemps on 6 or less (15 points)
 Strong Will +4 (16 points)
 Wealthy (20 points)

Disadvantages:

Delusion: Believes she is an avatar of Vishnu (-10 points)
 Duty: Supertemps on 9 or less (-5 points)
 Fanaticism: Hinduism (-15 points)
 Honesty (-10 points)
 Pacifism: Cannot kill (-15 points)
 Secret: Identity (-10 points)
 Sense of Duty: To all humanity (-15 points)
 Shyness (-10 points)
 Social Stigma: Minor (10 points)

Super Advantages:

Costume (20 points)
 Insubstantiality (Switchable +1; 83 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Alteration Power 1 (12 points)
 Morph-14 (1 point)
 Body Control Power 14 (84 points)
 Astral Projection-16 (Only along communication lines and in computers -2; 1 point)
 Confuse-13 (Affects Substantial +4; Only when Insubstantial -1; Touch Only -2; 1 point)
 Psychokinesis Power 7 (21 points)
 Levitation-14 (1 point)
 Telepathy Power 2 (20 points)
 (All Telepathy Power skills except Mind Shield have the following modifications: Computers Only +0; Can use communication lines to "touch" subject +3; Only when Insubstantial -1)
 Erase Signature-15 (8 points)
 Illusion-15 (8 points)
 Mental Blow-13 (2 points)
 Mind Shield-15 (2 points)
 Mindwipe-16 (12 points)
 Telecontrol-12 (1 point)
 Telereceive-15 (8 points)
 Telescan-15 (8 points)
 Telesend-15 (8 points)
 * Telepathy Power +8 (Mind Shield, 16 points)



Skills:

Area Knowledge (Houston)-17 (1/2 point); Astronomy-15 (1/2 point); Computer Operation-20 (2 points); Computer Programming-22 (12 points); Dancing-12 (4 points); Diplomacy-16 (1 point); Electronics (Computers)-17 (2 points); English-17 (1 point); Hindi-19 (1 point); Mathematics-16 (1 point); Musical Instrument (Sitar)-16 (1 point); Research-17 (1 point); Theology (Hinduism)-16 (1 point)

Quirks:

Vegetarian
 Won't tolerate alcohol or tobacco
 Doesn't own a television (reads newspapers)
 Prefers the Kalkin form when at home alone
 Likes *anything* chocolate

Story

Bhanu Srinivasthari was born near Delhi, India. As a girl, she studied the ancient scriptures of Hinduism (the Vedas, Upanishads, Mahabharata, Ramayana and Puranas); this was somewhat unusual, but her parents were fairly liberal about such things. She especially liked the stories of heroic figures such as Rama, the Hindu trimurti (Vishnu, Siva and Brahma), the heroes of the Mahabharata . . . but her favorite was Krishna, one of the avatars of Vishnu.

In some ways, however, Bhanu's parents were anything but liberal. For instance, at age three, Bhanu was engaged to be married to a young man from her village. He was a nice enough boy, but he wasn't what she envisioned a husband to be.

When she turned 14, Bhanu was prepared for the marriage. She stoically endured the many celebrations held for her and her fiancé until time for the marriage ceremony. She was so distraught from the stress and the suppression of emotion that she "cracked" and her heretofore latent metahuman powers manifested themselves.

At the climax of the ceremony, the attendees gaped as Bhanu suddenly changed into a beautiful goddess. She announced that her name was "Kalkin," and that she was the last of the ten avatars of Vishnu. Kalkin spoke accurately about events that had occurred in the temple long before she was born, and then began to rise. As she reached the ceiling, she simply rose through it. People streamed out of the temple and saw the goddess float up and away into the clouds.

Her parents, like everyone else, were too shocked, frightened and awed to do anything but go home. Bhanu was there, asleep in her room. Clearly, the marriage was off, but beyond that, Bhanu's parents didn't know what to do. They were afraid to stay in the village, so they moved to Delhi. There Bhanu went to school; she lost herself in the crowd and for several years was just like any other student.

Bhanu was an excellent student, specializing in mathematics. She decided that she wanted to go to the University, under a government program which encouraged women to study math and science. Her parents approved.

At the University of Delhi, however, her studies were much more challenging. One evening before a final exam, Bhanu found herself wishing she could change into Kalkin again in order to avoid the next day's test. As she completed the thought, she opened her eyes again to find that the transformation occurred!

This time she was in command of the new form. As Kalkin, she drifted through the night air above the city, flying through buildings and streets. She eventually returned to her dorm room and attempted to become Bhanu again. The transformation was instantaneous. She was too excited and exhausted to study, so she went to bed . . . and still did well on the exam.

Bhanu knew that the mere presence of Kalkin would cause evil men (Hindus, anyway) to rethink their ways. So Bhanu wandered the streets of Delhi searching for sacrilege and injustice. When she found it, she transformed into Kalkin and commanded the offenders to stop. It always worked.

Unfortunately, this practice had other consequences. People would mob her as they strove to touch an avatar of Vishnu. A few well-intentioned people had already discovered Bhanu and Kalkin were one and the same; it was just a matter of time before others found out as well.

In an attempt to continue her education and lead a more normal life, Bhanu left India to study computer science at the University of California, San Diego. She did spectacularly well, eventually graduating *magna cum laude*.

She refrained from becoming Kalkin in public, though at home she assumed Kalkin's form because she enjoyed it. As she studied, she discovered another talent: by touching a computer, she could directly sense its "thoughts." Even better, she could transmit her own ideas directly to the processor, subconsciously programming at the speed of thought.

This seemed a strange ability for a Hindu goddess to possess, but it did aid her in her career choice. Bhanu reasoned she would be unable to keep her "electrotelepathy" a secret if she went to

work for a computer company, so she went into business as a private computer consultant.

A little research revealed Houston as a promising location for her new business. Becoming successful proved only as difficult as getting her first client — once this was accomplished she found word-of-mouth was all the advertising she needed.

After three years, Bhanu began to miss helping people. She cut back her consulting work and signed up with the new Super-temps branch in Houston, where she works part time in the Guardian Division.

Campaign Role

Bhanu may be familiar to computer science students who studied at the same university. PCs who once lived in Delhi may have heard rumors of a Hindu goddess, and might have even sighted Kalkin once before.

But the greatest possibility for interaction comes from her small consultation company. Texas businesses will have heard of her phenomenal professional record. Computer security experts throughout the nation (including Watchdog, p. 60) will also be aware of Miss Srinivasthari.

Kalkin can be used for adventures into the electronic world of computers and information networks. See the *Introduction*, p. 5, for an idea.

Personality

Bhanu maintains her Hindu beliefs. She is a strict vegetarian, dresses in saris almost exclusively, wears a small red dot on her forehead and drinks no alcohol. Finally, she performs or attends a puja ritual at least once a week.

Abilities

Bhanu is able to transform into Kalkin with a simple thought. The transformation alters her body as well as her costume.

Kalkin is best known for her ability to fly, albeit slowly, and to become insubstantial. However, her greatest ability is that of linking her mind to the processor of a computer. Once this connection is established, she can interpret a computer's memory as easily as her own.

In addition to simply sending and receiving information, Kalkin can program a computer through her Telecontrol skill. She can search computer networks for a specific node (Telescan), temporarily disrupt a processor's functioning (Mental Blow), erase memory (Mindwipe), falsify peripheral input (Illusion), and remove evidence of her actions (Erase Signature). All of these abilities require that Kalkin be in some sort of direct contact with the subject, though a terminal will suffice. Kalkin can transport her consciousness along communications lines, usually in order to reach a distant computer.

The metahuman qualities that defend her from hostile electronic feedback also protect her from conventional psionic attacks. She is unable to use her telepathy on humans, but attempting to do so usually stuns the victim.

Battle Tactics

Kalkin is not equipped for skirmishes between supers. Since there is no reason *not* to become insubstantial at the first sign of trouble — maybe even earlier — she won't hesitate to do so.

As long as her ghostly state insures her safety, Kalkin will not involve herself in a fray. Instead, she will tap into some computer in an attempt to gain information that may turn the tide of the battle. In cases where her own well-being is threatened, or when no computer is accessible, Kalkin will go on the offensive, using her Confuse skill.

KID CHROME

ST 75 (216 points) IQ 11 (10 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 6.00 Move: 5

Damage: Punch 8d+3; Thrust 8d+2; Swing 10d+2

Appearance: Male human, black, age 17, 6' 3", 375 lbs., Arsenio Hall-like haircut, green eyes, very handsome, shiny, metallic skin.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Common Sense (10 points)

Handsome (15 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 6 or less (15 points)

Reputation +2 (10 points)

Strong Will +2 (8 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 9 or less (-5 points)

Enemy: Various criminal groups on 9 or less (-30 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Sense of Duty: To humanity (-15 points)

Youth (-4 points)

Super Advantages:

Body of Metal x 15 (120 points)

Damage Resistance + 16 (80 points)

Damage Resistance + 6 vs. metal (24 points)

Increased Density x 2 (20 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Dependency: Metal, weekly (-10 points)

Skills:

Area Knowledge (Atlanta)-11 (1 point); Bard-13 (6 points); Bicycling-12 (1 point); Brawling-15 (8 points); Dancing-13 (2 points); Diplomacy-10 (2 points); First Aid-11 (1 point); Judo-11 (2 points); Leadership-10 (1 point); Streetwise-10 (1 point); Tactics-9 (1 point)

Quirks:

Chews nails — literally! — when angry

Attends church every Sunday (devout Baptist)

Tolerant of others, to a point

Takes the responsibility of being a role model seriously

Tired of being asked if he likes "heavy metal" music (he hears the joke several times each week)

Story

Stan Andrews, like most ministers' children, got into his share of trouble. Luckily, he also gained a strong sense of right and wrong from his father. The combination of the two made Stan a popular figure at school; he wasn't above "cutting up," but he never did anything mean or malicious.

The members of Stan's group changed over the years, but he was always the center. He was well-liked even among those who



weren't in his circle of friends, and in his freshman year of high school he was elected class president. He seemed to be destined to be a leader.

Late one summer's day, Stan was riding his bike near some railroad tracks when he spotted a former member of his group talking to two strangers. As he watched, it became clear that he was witnessing a drug deal. When he tried to break up the buy, his friend started running — and the dealer pulled out a gun and fired into Stan's chest.

As the assailant ran for his car, a passenger train rounded the bend. The passengers, including Harvey Banks (see p. SS15), saw Stan clutch his chest and then start to change. His skin took on the look and feel of metal. He stood and leaped toward the gunman's car. The pusher shot Stan six more times; the bullets bounced off harmlessly. Stan ripped the door off the man's car, pulled him out . . . and realized that with his increased strength, if he hit the man, he would almost certainly kill him.

Stan delivered the man to the police, and agreed to cooperate with them in the subsequent investigation. The pusher agreed to turn state's evidence in return for a lighter sentence, but was killed before he could testify.

Stan had to make some adjustments. He didn't know what he was going to do next; he had no idea how, or whether, he could change back from his metallic form, and doubted he would be able to fit into society unless he could change back. In addition, he found he needed to supplement his normal diet with various

he found he needed to supplement his normal diet with various kinds of metal in order to survive. He carries a supply of nails, but doesn't like most over-the-counter iron supplements because of their high alcohol content.

Finally, he had a feeling that God had given him his powers for some reason. His father believed this as well, and suggested that he sign up with Supertemps. Stan agreed, on the condition that he could continue his education. Atlanta's Supertemps office already had sufficient metahuman resources, but a newly formed Defense Squad in Birmingham, Alabama, was looking for a brick — and the squad leader, known as the Poet, was an accredited teacher and would be willing to help Stan obtain a GED degree.

It sounded perfect. The Poet was a nice fellow and treated Stan well, but the other members of the team were standoffish. Stan felt he was being observed a little too closely, but he wasn't certain why.

One evening, Stan overheard the tail end of a conversation between the Poet and another squad member. He couldn't be sure, but it sounded very much as if they were discussing the division of a payoff from a local underworld figure! If true, this would be very serious; no Defense Squad had ever been on the take before, and Supertemps, concerned about its public image, would consider the matter very serious.

The next weekend, he went to visit his father for advice. Stan's father told him he had two choices: leave the team and say nothing, or stay with them and try to learn more. The latter course was more difficult (and dangerous) but Stan believed he had no choice. He contacted Supertemps headquarters, explained the situation, and was deputized to work undercover.

Stan began paying more attention to his teammates' off-duty activities. He "loosened up" a little, pretending his earlier reticence was due to inexperience and unfamiliar surroundings. As a result, the squad began to warm up to him.

The Poet gradually cut Stan in on the take. He stayed undercover for a month, tracing the payments back to organized crime and a group of metahuman criminals. He finally called in the police when told that the group was supposed to "look the other way" during a planned bank robbery.

The situation created quite a stir when it hit the news; it made Stan something of a celebrity. Kid Chrome, aided by the Supertemps publicity department, quickly developed into a teen idol. He is currently touring the country, staying a week or two with each Defense Squad while making personal appearances at local schools. Stan is very conscious of his status as a role model and puts up with the hype because, as he says, "Better me than people like Deathwish." He makes cameo appearances in TV shows and music videos, and at least one producer is interested in doing *The Kid Chrome Story* with Stan in the starring role.

Campaign Role

Kid Chrome travels constantly, and could team up with any Defense Squad. Characters with connections in the entertainment industry could rub shoulders with the Kid.

He's made several enemies in organized crime (not to mention the meta-villains he's crossed!), and there's a price on his head. Investigative heroes may learn about a plot to collect the bounty, leading the PCs to come to his aid.

Personality

Somehow, Kid Chrome manages to be positive, upbeat, a practicing Christian and an all-around nice guy (the adjective "squeaky-clean" has sometimes been used) with not even a hint of insincerity or cynicism. The Stan Andrews people see in front of the camera is the same Stan Andrews they meet on the street.

Stan is a devout Baptist, attending services every Sunday. He views his metahuman powers as neither a curse or a blessing; they're just a tool God has given him to help his fellow men.

The Kid is very tolerant (which sometimes surprises those who don't know him), but this tolerance does not extend to drug dealers.

Abilities

Kid Chrome's body is composed of a metallic substance of unknown composition. He is heavier and far stronger than a normal human of his age. He is also resistant to most forms of attack, particularly if metal-based. Stan must eat about a quarter-pound of metal each week, in addition to a regular diet; otherwise he begins to feel ill. He doesn't know if a lack of metal will cause him to die, but he's not anxious to find out.

Battle Tactics

The Kid has not followed any special tactical plan in the past; he just finds a suitable opponent and charges. He will pull his punches unless he knows his opponent can take their full force. If acting under a team leader, Kid Chrome will attempt to follow orders to the letter. He recently acquired a copy of Sam Mitchell's *The Metahuman in Combat* (see Watchdog, p. 60) and is trying to put its principles into action.

Adventure Seed: Not A Happy Camper

During the summer, Kid Chrome keeps himself busy by visiting youth camps and retreats. The kids love him — twelve of them can wrestle him at a time, and he tells better ghost stories than most of the regular counselors.

On a particular Saturday afternoon, Stan is at Camp Shamonaway in the Adirondacks. The camp is right next to a great swimming hole (not that Stan can swim — he doesn't have any body fat, and can't float!), a forest that has lots of hiking trails, and (best of all!) is across the lake from a girls' camp.

It's also very close to a hunting camp owned by an extremist group (it doesn't matter which one; choose one that fits your campaign). The members of this group come up to get away from the city to shoot at each other with paint-pellet ammunition. (The guns use compressed gas and don't make enough noise to be heard across the lake.) Of course, they also have "hunting" equipment such as M10s, M16s and Claymore anti-personnel mines stowed away in the cabin — just in case.

While Stan is at the camp, the extremists are playing soldier, shooting away at each other — when a rival group of extremists drives into the camp, guns blazing. They knew the first group would be here and intend to take them out, once and for all.

Of course, the first group will abandon their paint guns, run to their weapons stash and start shooting back. At the same time the sound of gunfire will carry across the lake.

Kid Chrome, of course, will get the kids to safety and call to New York for help. In the time it takes the Defense Squad to get to the camp, the fighting will have spilled over to the edges of both of the youth camps (but no farther). The heroes' mission is to get the kids to safety and to stop the fighting — preferably by incarcerating the extremists.

Power Variation

250-point version: Lower ST to 33; lower DX to 11; lower HT to 11; lower Handsome to Attractive; drop Reputation; lower Strong Will to +1; lower Increased Density to $\times 1$; lower Body of Metal to $\times 9$; lower Damage Resistance vs. metal to +3; lower Damage Resistance to +6; lower Dancing skill level to 12.

LUMINAR

ST 13 (30 points) IQ 12 (20 points)

DX 14 (45 points) HT 15 (60 points)

Speed: 7.25 Move: 9

Damage: Laser 6d-2 imp; Punch 1d-1/3d-1; Thrust 1d/3d; Swing 1d+3/5d+2

Appearance: Male human, Amerindian, age 25, 8' 2", 320 lbs., slick black hair falls loose on his shoulders, brown eyes, dark, ruddy skin (turns bright red in sunlight).

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)

Acute Vision +3 (6 points)

Attractive (5 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Comfortable Wealth (10 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Bad Temper (-10 points)

Code of Honor: Never strikes the first blow, never attacks from behind (-10 points)

Compulsive Behavior: Gambling (-10 points)

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Gigantism (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Sense of Duty: To friends and teammates (-5 points)

Unluckiness (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Damage Resistance +5 (Only in sunlight -3; 18 points)

Enhanced ST +17 (Only in sunlight -3; 67 points)

Super Disadvantages:

Dependency: Sunlight, daily (-15 points)

Vulnerability: 1d vs. Light attacks (-10 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Darkness Power 4 (28 points)

Blind-14 (12 points)

Create Darkness-14 (Increased Area \times 2 +8; Variable light level +1; 48 points)

Light Power 8 (64 points)

Flash-13 (8 points)

Illuminate-14 (Increased Area +4; Variable light level +1; 32 points)

Laser-16 (No Concentration +2; 28 points)

* Light Power +7 (Laser, 42 points)

Skills:

Bow-13 (2 points); Brawling-15 (2 points); Carousing-15 (2 points); Driving (Car)-12 (1/2 point); Gambling-12 (2 points); Guns (Pistol)-18 (2 points); Performance-10 (1/2 point); Running-14 (2 points); Sex Appeal-15 (2 points); Shadowing-12 (2 points); Sport (Surfing)-13 (1 point); Stealth-14 (2 points); Survival (Urban)-12 (2 points)



Quirks:

Calls Alpha-7 "Alphonse" — helps him find flashy clothes

Likes horse racing but never bets more than \$2 on a race

Visits Disneyland every chance he gets

Goes surfing every Saturday

Fast food junkie (especially likes Taco Bell™)

Story

William Raintree grew up on the wrong side of town. In a culturally and racially diverse section of southeast Los Angeles, he learned more lessons on the street than in the classroom.

Under the best of conditions Billy was an indifferent student. He was never well, though; he always seemed to have a cough, or a cold, or both. The clinics his mother reluctantly took him to just gave him a few pills. The medicine helped while it lasted, but that was never long enough.

Billy skipped a lot of school due to his illness. His mother was indifferent; she had only gone to school through the sixth grade and felt that education had never done anything for anyone she knew. When he went to school, he was so far behind that he was constantly embarrassed. He was growing much faster than his peers, and the other kids constantly called him a big, ugly idiot. Finally, one day when a teacher took him to task for not knowing what "parallel" meant, he left the school and never went back.

He started roaming the streets, eventually joining a gang called the Talons. He was out in the fresh air and his health improved greatly. And he started to change; his skin became tough and red, and when he was out in the sun it *glowed*.

Billy also became stronger. When his skin started glowing, he found he was stronger than any of the members of the gang — even Guillermo (who was seven years older, six inches taller and weighed 100 pounds more than he did).

Eddie, the Talons' leader, sensed that Billy wanted to take control of the Talons. One day when the gang was meeting indoors, Eddie made his move. He said Billy was a metahuman, a freak, and there were gangs in L.A. that would take freaks but the Talons weren't one of them. As he said this, four of Eddie's supporters pulled knives and turned them on Billy.

Suddenly the room went dark. When the lights went up again, Billy was nowhere to be seen. He had dimmed the light in the room and escaped.

Billy went back to wandering the street. The next day, quite by accident, he stumbled upon a film crew packing up to leave. He asked a bystander what was going on; the bystander replied that he wasn't sure, but had heard something about the lighting being too bright. Billy found the director and asked if the scene needed to be darker. When the director didn't reply Billy used his power to darken the area and asked again.

The director looked up at Raintree, then at the dimmed area, and watched as the light returned and then dimmed again, his gaze finally settling on Billy's smile. Then he picked up a megaphone and ordered the crew back to work, and told his assistant to start the paperwork to hire the guy with the red skin.

Raintree knew nothing about filming, but learned quickly as the director explained the moods and lighting he wanted. At the end of the day Billy had a substantial amount of money in his pocket and a firm job offer with the director.

Billy took an apartment near the studio and sent some money to his mother (thus confirming her estimate of the value of education). The director did most of his lighting the old-fashioned way, using Billy for special shots. This left him with a lot of time on his hands, so to alleviate boredom he would often help the crew hands move equipment. As long as he was careful to stay in the sunlight he could lift a ton or more.

He enjoyed his work and the money, but felt that with his talents he could do more. In particular, he thought he'd like to be a stunt man but didn't know who to talk to. He didn't know how to find a good agent, and didn't think a traditional agent would be able to manage a metahuman client. Over a round of beers one evening, a friend suggested he contact Supertemps. Billy had only heard of the company's Defense Squads, but his friend assured him that they also specialized in finding "normal" work for metahumans.

Sure enough, Supertemps was interested in him. As soon as his original contract with the studio expired he signed on, took the trade name of "Luminar" and went to work.

As part of his evaluation, Luminar underwent the standard battery of tests and discovered that he had an ability he had not known about — he could focus light into a powerful laser. Supertemps offered to train him in the use of this weapon in return for occasional Guardian Division jobs. He readily agreed.

Luminar is currently on leave from the Industrial Division; he was sent to form a new Defense Squad in San Diego with Alpha-7 (see p. 8). The big Indian and the shiny robot are an unlikely pair, though they've become good friends and effective teammates.

Campaign Role

Since Luminar grew up in a crime-torn section of town, PCs with similar backgrounds may have crossed paths with him. Former police officers and heroes with long careers may have patrolled the neighborhoods Luminar frequented.

Virtually everyone in the motion picture industry knows of his involvement there. He served as a stunt man in several movies and even had a bit part in a forgettable film.

Personality

Raintree is more like an average citizen than an average hero. He looks out for number one, and treats his duty like a job. Of course, the responsibilities of that job include risking his life.

He can become violently angry when frustrated, but would never lift a finger to harm an innocent person. He also possesses a self-sacrificing sense of honor; he will always wait for his opponent to strike first, and never attacks from behind.

Abilities

Luminar controls and manipulates light. Within his area of effect he can raise or lower the ambient light level, from pitch darkness all the way to painfully bright. Each level of the Increased Area enhancement (+4 levels) doubles the Area Affected radius; thus, Luminar commands an 8-hex radius area with his powers.

Instead of gradually altering the light level, Luminar may "pulse" a large quantity of light, producing a blinding flash. Also, he may remove all light from a particular location, such as the area about an opponent's head, rendering that opponent temporarily blind.

Luminar's most direct use of his powers is to channel light into a tightly focused beam — a laser. For aiming purposes he usually creates the beam from the tip of his left index finger.

In the presence of sunlight, Luminar's skin becomes bright red. More important, he also gains resistance to damage and great strength. Without exposure to the sun's rays, Luminar will weaken, become sick, and eventually die. The relationship between his powers and sunlight dependency is not yet understood.

Battle Tactics

Luminar will wear his costume (reinforced with Kevlar) when on patrol or when called to the scene of a crime. In a battle he will move toward any available sunlight, probably bringing the ruckus with him.

In most instances, Luminar has relied on his fingertip laser beam, blasting opponents while dodging their return fire. However, his teammate Alpha-7 has suggested using the illumination powers to confuse their foes. Luminar does this occasionally but he can't see through the darkness either, so he uses it sparingly.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower ST to 11; lower DX to 12; lower HT to 13; drop Combat Reflexes; drop Comfortable Wealth; drop Enhanced ST; drop one Increased Area enhancement from Create Darkness and Illuminate skills; drop No Concentration enhancement from Laser skill; lower Laser skill level to 14; drop additional Laser Power; lower Driving (Car) skill level to 11; lower Running skill level to 10; drop Shadowing skill.

750-point version: Add Night Vision; raise Enhanced ST to +37; drop Vulnerability; raise Darkness Power to 8; add two Increased Area enhancements to Create Darkness and three to Illuminate skill; raise * Light Power (Laser) to +18; raise Brawling skill level to 16; raise Carousing skill level to 16.

LYNX

ST 9 (-10 points) IQ 12 (20 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 11 (10 points)

Speed: 5.75 Move: 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d-1

Appearance: Female human, white, age 16, 5' 6", 105 lbs., long, black hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 475

Advantages:

Animal Empathy (5 points)

Charisma +3 (15 points)

Empathy (15 points)

Patron: Super temps on 6 or less (15 points)

Voice (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Absent-Mindedness (-15 points)

Duty: Super temps on 9 or less (-5 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Impulsiveness (-10 points)

Pacifism: Self-defense only (-15 points)

Phobia (Mild): Crowds (-15 points)

Sense of Duty: Every living being (-20 points)

Shyness (-10 points)

Truthfulness (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Infravision (15 points)

Speak with Animal (25 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Body Control Power 10 (60 points)

Damage Control-18 (36 points)

Healing-18 (Self only -2; 28 points)

Metabolism Control-18 (36 points)

Nature Power 6 (30 points)

Animal Control-18 (No Obvious Effect +3; Only to soothe -3; 36 points)

Sonic Power 1 (5 points)

Mimicry-18 (No Concentration +2; 44 points)

Telepathy Power 7 (35 points)

Suggest-18 (No Concentration +2; No Obvious Effect +3; Reduced Fatigue Cost +4; Only to soothe -3; 60 points)

Skills:

Animal Handling-20 (20 points); Climbing-13 (4 points); First Aid-13 (4 points); Naturalist-17 (14 points); Riding-15 (16 points); Survival (Woods)-15 (8 points); Tracking-15 (8 points); Veterinary-15 (0 points, from Animal Handling)

Quirks:

Uncomfortable during full moons

Likes the taste of diet soda

Hates wearing shoes

Vegetarian

Doesn't like hunters who don't use what they kill



Story

Betty Smith was born and raised in eastern Idaho, near Yellowstone Park and the Grand Tetons. Her father was a forest ranger, and her mother a zoologist, so Betty was always surrounded by the outdoors and its inhabitants — which suited her just fine, since she could speak to most animals.

Betty found she was able to talk to animals as soon as she could speak. She quickly made friends with most of the neighborhood fauna. She got along particularly well with dogs, and she liked birds, but found their conversational skills limited.

Of course her parents didn't believe her. When Betty was little they wrote her stories off as childhood play, but as she grew older they became worried and took her to a child psychologist. At this point, Betty realized that her ability was something unusual and best not spoken of, so she pretended to be "cured."

Betty continued to interact with the various creatures around her home, but in secret. Her relationship with her parents became somewhat strained as a result, due to her sneaking around. There was no real hostility, but Betty's parents could sense she was shutting them out in part. And it hurt them.

Most of the kids at school thought Betty was "weird" when asked. They couldn't say *why* they thought she was weird, but she was. As a result, Betty had few human friends and spent more and more time conversing with her animal friends.

Betty's mother died when Betty was twelve. Her death had a profound impact on Betty and her father; he took it especially hard and, unable to deal with his own grief, could not console Betty. She turned to her animal friends, but for the most part they just accepted death as "something that happens" and could not understand why Betty was so deeply affected.

One day Betty was talking to the family dog and her father noticed. Normally she would have heard him coming and stopped, but at that moment she was too upset. In his grief, her father berated her for being crazy and talking to the dog. She ran away in tears. Later he regretted what he had said and went to apologize, but Betty was nowhere to be found. She had decided to go as deep into the forest as she could.

Betty had learned survival skills from her parents, and her animal friends would help her as well. A search party went looking for her, but she easily eluded them. After Betty had been in the forest for three weeks, she stumbled across a sick, wounded bear. It threatened to attack her; she tried to reason with it, but in its pain it saw her as an enemy and charged.

In a last-ditch effort to save herself, Betty shouted to the bear to stop. As she did, she felt something strange happen to her voice, and a wave of sensation passed through her entire body. The bear stopped and she continued to speak to it, dropping back into a soothing tone. Its panic and fear seemed to slowly melt away. Betty walked up to the animal and began stroking the coarse fur, continuing to calm the beast. Soon the bear relaxed completely and was asleep. Betty then tended to its wounds as best she could.

The bear was badly wounded and she had no idea how much longer it would sleep. Still, she decided to try to get aid for it. She hiked to the nearest ranger station and told him what had happened. The ranger was a family friend and insisted on calling her father; she told them to meet her at the bear's location.

They hiked back to find the bear, and Betty's father met them en route. The reunion was overshadowed by the matter at hand as Betty described the bear's condition. As they approached, it was still asleep, but when it heard them it woke up and snarled, ready for attack. The men reached for their guns, but Betty got between them and the bear. The rangers then watched in amazement as Betty calmed the beast down again. She stayed with it until it could be moved to a veterinarian.

After the incident, Betty's father apologized and asked her to return home. Their reunion was strained at first, but gradually he came to accept that his daughter actually could talk with animals. Eventually they grew closer than they had ever been.

As Betty entered junior high school, she tried to shed some of her reputation for "weirdness." She made an effort to get along with people and made a few friends. Still, she missed her mother. She also started to help her dad with his work — he found that having someone who could speak directly with the forest's inhabitants made certain parts of his job much easier!

Still, Betty was considered something of a curiosity. Her story appeared in area newspapers, and a TV "reality show" did a four-minute piece on her. Then the novelty faded, and she went back to leading a fairly normal life . . . until two years later, when she helped solve the Osgood murders.

The Osgoods were a prominent local family. One night, someone broke into their house and murdered all five of them. The only survivors were family pets: a dog, a cat and a parakeet. Police could find no coherent clues, but a detective investigating the case remembered reading about "the girl who talks to animals." He decided to ask if she would help. She agreed, and by questioning the animals was able to give the police a thorough description of the killer. The animals' testimony, though it would not be admissible in court, helped the police make sense

of clues they had uncovered and eventually led to the arrest of the killer and his conviction on five counts of murder.

As news of the case spread, people began to treat Betty's talent as more than a curiosity. Offers for her services began to stream in — many more than she could handle. She decided the easiest way to screen the offers would be to work through Super-temps, so she registered with their nearest office (in Salt Lake City!) as the "Lynx."

Betty is still going to school, so she can't work full-time, but she does take cases she thinks are important. She doesn't plan to make a career as a super; she would rather be a forest ranger or veterinarian, but hasn't yet decided which she prefers.

Campaign Role

Lynx could show up in any adventure involving animals. Characters who need to track someone or something through the wilderness may meet, or even hire, Lynx.

Personality

Betty Smith is a normal, happy teenager. She is a bit shy, however. Her mannerisms and modes of speech are a bit unusual, as she has adopted some perspectives and attitudes of the animal kingdom. She actively dislikes those who hunt for sport, though she accepts hunters who actually eat what they kill.

Abilities

Lynx is able to communicate with most animals. The degree of interaction depends on the creature's intelligence and disposition. She doesn't necessarily get along with every animal she meets, however; for instance, despite her name, she isn't terribly fond of most cats — she finds them distastefully arrogant. She nearly always likes birds, however — even birds of prey.

She is also able to calm animals and humans by talking to them. There is something about her voice which is naturally soothing to the ear.

Battle Tactics

Lynx will use her calming power against any potential threats. If this doesn't work, she will try to run, though at that point it might be too late. Animals in the area may come to her aid, but she would never ask them to risk their lives for her benefit. She will never endanger animals intentionally.

Adventure Seed: He's Back

Will Garfield was a model prisoner at the Idaho State Penitentiary; he kept his nose clean, did as he was told and read voraciously. After he'd served a year of his sentence, he was transferred to a minimum-security farm — and promptly escaped. He was never found and remains at large.

Shortly after he escaped, Betty Smith began receiving threatening letters. They were unsigned, and she didn't know for sure who they were from, but she could guess — Will Garfield, the man she helped send to prison for the Osgood murders.

Betty reached the last straw when she found another threatening note stuck to her door with a knife — and a bird impaled on the knife as well. She has called Super-temps and asked for a Defense Squad to help the police find Garfield.

Garfield is psychotic, but not stupid; he has been following Betty's career and knows she can get information from animals. He has been very careful to stay hidden except when delivering his notes; even then he disguises himself. He doesn't plan to leave any more notes; he is waiting to get Betty alone so he can kill her, but he wants her to suffer first.

NUCLEUS

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 15 (60 points)
 DX 10 (0 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 5.50 Move: 5 (10 flying)
 Damage: Flame Jet 3d+3; Fireball 7d; Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d
 Appearance: Male human, Mediterranean, age 31, 5' 7", 145 lbs., black hair, brown eyes, dark complexion.
 Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Mathematical Ability (10 points)
 Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)
 Reputation: +2 as noted nuclear physicist (10 points)
 Wealthy (20 points)

Disadvantages:

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
 Enemy: TRADE on 6 or less (-15 points)
 Odious Personal Habit: Constantly uses obtuse, technical jargon (-5 points)
 Secret: Identity (-10 points)
 Secret: Won't reveal his discoveries (-5 points)
 Stubbornness (-5 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Vulnerability: 4d from Electrical attacks (-40 points)

Super Equipment:

Nanosuit (Breakable: DR 15, HP 75 -15%; Can Be Hit at -20%; 411 points)
 Costume (Affects Others +4; Wall×2 +6)
 Damage Resistance +15
 Flight (Affects Others +4; Wall×2 +6; Only when shrunk -1)
 Invulnerability (Very Rare): His own explosions (Affects Others +4; Wall×2 +6)
 Shrinking×10 (Affects Others +4; Wall×2 +6)
 Heat/Fire Power 3
 Fireball-16 (Explosive Effect +3; Only when shrunk -1; Touch Only -2)
 Flame Jet-16 (Only when shrunk -1)
 * Heat/Fire Power +10 (Fireball)

Skills:

Area Knowledge (Phoenix)-16 (2 points); Area Knowledge (Southern California)-15 (1 point); Battlesuit-14 (1 point); Brawling-11 (2 points); Chemistry-16 (4 points); Computer Operation-14 (1/2 point); Computer Programming-13 (1 point); Demolition-14 (1 point); Electronics (Computers)-13 (1 point); Engineer (Battlesuit)-14 (2 points); Guns (Revolver)-13 (2 points); Guns (Shotgun)-12 (1 point); Leadership-13 (1/2 point); Mathematics-13 (1 point); Musical Instrument (Piano)-14 (2 points); Physics-15 (4 points); Piloting (Single engine prop)-11 (4 points); Research-15 (2 points); Writing-14 (1 point)



Quirks:

Impatient with others
 Looking for a woman he can consider his intellectual equal
 Hangs around with Skylord
 Always has to have the newest, fastest computer hardware
 Plays ragtime piano to relax

Story

Vincent Kyriakados was always demanding of everybody — especially himself. He excelled in school, from first-grade mathematics to high-school logic courses. Even if he hadn't been a genius, Vincent was so *driven* to succeed that he never failed. That drive distanced him from other students, who inevitably found Vincent haughty, blunt and overly competitive.

Though he was rather small in build, even football players made sure to stay out of Vincent's way. If he got into a fight he usually won, but even when he didn't, his opponent always regretted the encounter.

Vincent received full scholarship offers from all over the country; he chose to go to Harvard, where he maintained — possibly even amplified — his eccentric personality. After obtaining his bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry, he moved to MIT to work on his doctorate. His research advisor there was an older professor who was rapidly approaching retirement. He was just marking time, and didn't investigate or

participate in Vincent's research — he was content to sign authorization forms whenever they crossed his desk, which was precisely what Vincent wanted.

The idea for his experiments came from a footnote he discovered in an obscure paper on particle physics. Vincent's calculations indicated that the scale of any object placed within a particular energy field (that he would develop) would decrease dramatically. That meant that objects could be miniaturized to molecular or sub-molecular sizes!

Test specimens placed within the *nanofield* (as he called it), including his pet cat, survived the experience, so Vincent began the next phase of his project: construction of a *nanosuit* that would generate the shrinking field. The hard part (generating the nanofield) had already been done, so the nanosuit was quickly completed. Of course he would not allow anyone but himself to test the suit; he put it on, started the field and became the first human to meet a molecule face to face.

After thorough testing and documentation, Vincent built a spare suit, then dismantled most of his lab. His preliminary research was more than enough to serve as a dissertation and attract attention in a technical journal, but Vincent felt the world wasn't ready for the scientific and economic repercussions of his discoveries. The material he *did* release would spark study in this area, and his results would eventually be duplicated, but the world would have enough time to anticipate and prepare for the consequences of miniaturization technology. (It took Vincent seven years to generate the nanofield, and he is certain it will take other researchers longer.) Then, by following the progress of nanofield experiments, Vincent could still publish his results well ahead of anyone else — probably earning a Nobel prize in the process.

Dr. Kyriakados tried teaching, but quickly lost patience with all but the most dedicated students. Rather than face the embarrassment of being asked to resign, Vincent landed a job with a major physical research lab. He contented himself with his day-to-day duties, then tested and improved his nanosuit in the evenings.

He also joined Dr. Amos Tolnin's fledgling STAR organization (see p. 55). STAR never really got off the ground, and filed for bankruptcy within two years. By then Vincent had left to pursue another idea. TRADE (see p. 550) had recently been in the news, and Vincent saw that even though they were on the wrong side of the law (not to mention morality), their techniques were still valid. He had hypothesized the combat potential of the nanosuit, but was more interested in its other uses. Since he was by training and temperament a scientist and had no combat experience beyond schoolyard fights, he decided to contact the experts — Supertemps. Within a week, he had two assignments from the Industrial Division and one from the Guardian Division.

When his career as the "Nucleus" took off, Vincent got in touch with his old friend Amos Tolnin. STAR had gone into bankruptcy and Tolnin was having little success as a consultant; as soon as he got the offer, Tolnin packed up and moved to Phoenix, where he became Skylord. The two of them are one of Supertemps' few constant teams.

Campaign Role

Vincent Kyriakados has never been outgoing or gregarious, so it's unlikely that others will have encountered him in his normal identity. The exception would be scientists involved in sub-atomic physics, who may have read his papers or even have met him, and those who belonged to or worked with STAR.

Nucleus, on the other hand, is a familiar name to anyone who follows Arizona news or metahuman events. With his ability to affect others by using the nanofield, he can be a vehicle for supers delving into the unknown reaches of inner space.

Dr. Kyriakados is still a brilliant chemist and physicist, and enjoys challenges. If a player character has an experiment in mind, and it sounds sufficiently challenging, Vincent might decide to take it on — but *only* if it presented a challenge. Routine problems, or problems that aren't sufficiently challenging, simply bore him.

Personality

Vincent is hard to get along with. He is a "techno-nerd" — he can handle intricate scientific details, but has trouble dealing with people. Part of the problem is his chronic impatience; he finds it so easy to understand concepts like atomic structure and organic chemical reactions, and can't understand why other people can't follow his explanations.

Part of the reason for being Nucleus is to test the nanosuit, but not all. Dr. Vincent Kyriakados's heart is in the right place, and he sincerely wants to help people.

Abilities

Nucleus' primary power is the ability to generate an enclosed field of energy that shrinks whatever it contains — the nanofield. The mechanisms that form and control the nanofield are contained in a special suit. Consequently, activation of the nanosuit shrinks Nucleus himself. There is no theoretical limit to reduction capability of the nanofield, though Nucleus has never explored below the subatomic level.

When shrunk down to the atomic level, Nucleus "flies" by means of electrodynamic repulsion. A microprocessor connected to environment sensors on the nanosuit adjusts the nanofield to produce motion in the desired direction.

Nucleus' primary offensive weapon is atomic explosion. He will select an atom, draw it into the nanofield and use a device built into his nanosuit to convert the atom into pure energy. By manipulating the nanofield, Nucleus can channel the direction and energy of the explosion. He has so far been unable to summon the energies necessary to split an atom *outside* the nanofield.

Recently Nucleus has discovered a way to extend the nanofield beyond the nanosuit a modest distance. This permits him to miniaturize others with him, as well as propel the whole group using his usual method.

Battle Tactics

Nucleus shrinks before entering a hostile situation, largely so that he can fly to the scene. If any teammates are not capable of extremely rapid movement, he'll offer to take them with him in this manner.

In combat, he relies on his small size to protect him from enemy attacks, though the nanosuit possesses some innate defenses. Area Affect attacks, especially, pose a definite threat.

His most direct offense is the most effective: Nucleus will fly directly on top of his opponent and initiate an explosion. He tries to avoid including his teammates in the blast, but they are well-advised to look out for themselves.

Power Variation

750-point version: Raise DX to 11; lower Vulnerability to 1d; change Breakable gadget limitation to DR 30, HP 90; raise Heat/Fire Power to 13; lower Research skill level to 14.

Physician

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 15 (60 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 10 (0 points)

Speed: 5.50 Move: 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Male human, black, 5' 9", 205 lbs., black hair (graying at temples), brown eyes, black moustache and beard (some gray), wears glasses.

Point Total: 500

Advantage:

Comfortable Wealth (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Bad Sight: Nearsighted (-10 points)

Combat Paralysis (-15 points)

Enemy: Those who want to use him on 6 or less (-10 points)

Low Pain Threshold (-10 points)

Pacifism: Total non-violence (-30 points)

Sense of Duty: Humanity (-15 points)

Vow: His life is dedicated to heal the deserving (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Extra Fatigue +30 (Only to heal -1; 135 points)

Regrowth (Affects Others +4; Area Effect +4; Movable Area +3; Does not affect self -3; Only one limb at a time -1; 68 points)

Power and Super-Skill:

Body Control Power 26 (130 points)

Healing-25 (Reduced Fatigue Cost $\times 5$ +20; 132 points)

Skills:

Computer Operation-15 (1 point); Diagnosis-16 (6 points); First Aid-16 (2 points); Genetics-13 (1 point); Physician-16 (6 points); Research-14 (1 point); Savoir-Faire-15 (1 point); Spanish-15 (2 points); Surgery-20 (28 points); Teaching-15 (2 points)

Quirks:

Has almost no sense of humor remaining

Can go 48 hours without sleep

Impatient with orderlies

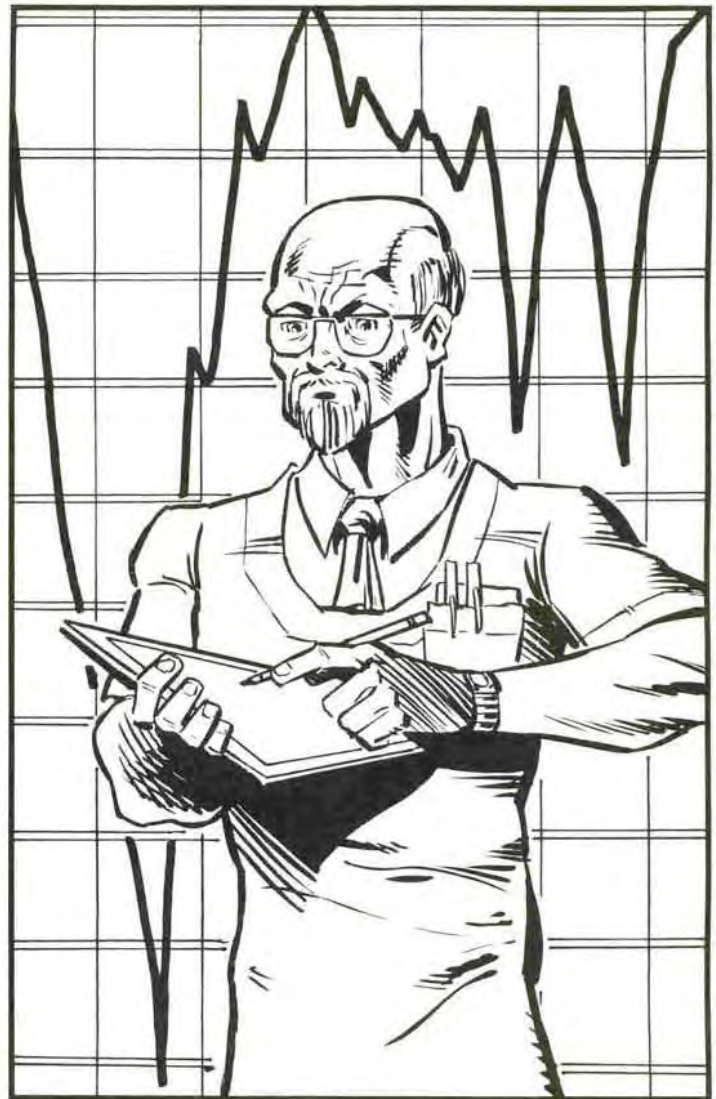
Checks his over-stuffed mailbox once a month

Goes to the zoo to watch other families

Story

James Robinson never wanted to be anything but a doctor. Other children changed their ideas about what they wanted to be almost as often as they changed their socks; if you asked James, his answer was invariable: "A doctor." Only once did he change his mind: at about age 11, he started telling everyone he wanted to be "a surgeon."

James was fascinated by medicine and surgery. By the time he was fifteen, he had read every book in the public library on the subject and was visiting the college library to read the *AMA Journal*. His parents understood completely; his all-time favorite Christmas present was the most recent edition of the *Physician's Desk Reference*.



His family didn't have much money, but they recognized that James had the drive to finish his studies, so they set aside a little money for his college fund. He studied hard to ensure a scholarship and applied for every grant he could find. He proved to be eloquent in his interviews and made an impression with everyone he came in contact with. As a result, he came up with enough scholarships and grants to put him through pre-med.

College was, if anything, easier than high school for James. He had never found non-science courses easy, and now he had to take only a minimum of them. By taking extra class loads and attending summer school, James finished his undergraduate work in less than three years.

Of course James had no problems getting into medical school, and again his progress was stunning. He was studying exactly what he wanted to, and immersed himself totally. Several prominent physicians liked what they saw and took James under their wing, training him in advanced techniques that other students wouldn't even hear about for several years.

Finally, his long years of work paid off. James received his medical degree and was certified as a surgeon. He set up his practice, renting an office and hiring a staff — and then discovered that he had been so busy getting an education for so many years that he had almost no social life. He was highly successful as a surgeon and was helping others, but he was lonely.

One night after the office closed, James invited his office manager, Cynthia, out to dinner. He explained his life and loneliness to her and asked if she had any suggestions. "Well, yes, Doctor," she said. "I would suggest that you find a nice girl, and then maybe take her out to a restaurant and just talk and get to know her. You might be surprised what could happen." He was about to ask what could happen when he caught the twinkle in her eye. They continued to date and were married six months later.

James and Cynthia had two sons and a daughter over the next five years. He was enjoying the part of his life he'd been missing over the last few years. They did all the things he felt a family should do — read stories together, take long walks, go to the park. Sometimes they'd close the office for a couple of weeks, pile the kids into the car, and go on vacation.

On one vacation trip, they stopped at a motel in the middle of the afternoon. James had a splitting headache and wanted to lie down for a while. Cynthia volunteered to take the kids over to the restaurant to get something to eat while her husband got some sleep. He kissed her, dropped onto the bed and was just about to doze off when he heard the crash. A semi had plowed into the Robinsons' car.

James ran over to the scene of the accident, arriving at the same time as the ambulance. Two of the children were dead at the scene, and Cynthia and one of their sons were alive but in critical condition. He rode with them in the ambulance to the hospital, but was not allowed to enter the operating room.

He was able to convince the hospital staff he was a surgeon, but hospital rules prohibited a surgeon from operating on members of his own family. Besides, James was distraught and in no condition to work. Frustrated and unhappy, his headache growing until it seemed like it would take over his entire body, he paced the corridor outside the emergency room, waiting for the chaplain or for word on Cynthia and their son.

As he waited, paramedics brought in another emergency case and left the gurney in the hallway while a spot in the emergency room could be vacated. The man was in bad shape; he had apparently taken a shotgun blast in the chest at close range. One of the paramedics said he didn't know what was keeping the man alive.

On an impulse James walked up to the gurney. Before the paramedics could stop him, he touched the man on the head and arm, and the crippling pain James had felt channeled itself through his arms and emerged as a glow which surrounded the man. As the paramedics watched, the man's internal organs began to knit, the bleeding stopped, his ribcage regenerated and skin grew over the wound. Within a minute, the man was completely healed.

James knew this was a manifestation of a metahuman power. He turned to attempt to force his way to his wife and son, but as he turned, he saw the surgeon in charge emerge from the operating room, and the look on his face told James he didn't even have to ask. His wife and son were dead.

The loss, and the knowledge he had had the power to save them and couldn't, devastated him. Worse, two days later, he was watching the news and saw a report of a hostage situation at a nearby fast-food restaurant. The man killed ten people and wounded 20 others and James was sick to his stomach to find that the killer was the man he had healed. After his family's funeral, he started drinking.

James turned his practice over to other doctors and regularly drank himself into a stupor, refusing visitors and only leaving his house to walk to the liquor store. After four months, however, he came to the conclusion that living the rest of his life in a drunken haze was not going to change the past.

He spent a week drying out, then threw himself into a new project — learning everything he could about metahumans and medicine.

James decided that he would use his powers to heal only those who truly deserved it. Accordingly, he signed up with Supertemps as the "Physician." His announced fee schedule starts at \$100,000, but this is mostly to deter curiosity seekers or at least to part the fool and his money. He will work for free if he feels the circumstances warrant it; as an example, in the name of international goodwill he recently toured the site of the Armenian earthquake, healing the burned and injured victims without charge.

Campaign Role

The Physician could be brought in to help severely injured characters. He is likely to aid ethical, "heroic" metahumans who put the lives of others above their own, and will not aid ruthless avengers who kill to achieve their goals.

Personality

James Robinson is a profoundly lonely man. He is trying to atone for the loss of his family, and for the actions of the psychopath he cured. The few people who know him have tried to convince him his guilt is unfounded, but to no avail. He is friendly, but in a quiet sort of way.

Abilities

The Physician can heal all but the most serious wounds, and can also cure most diseases. He is able to regenerate lost body parts, too. This takes time, and once the limb or organ has grown back, the Physician's power leaves the patient's body.

Battle Tactics

The Physician will not raise his hand against another living thing. If this means his own death, so be it. It will be up to his compatriots to defend the Physician.

Adventure Seed: The Big Ones

Supertemps regularly receives VIP tickets to sporting events, concerts and the like; most teams and promoters welcome the publicity that having a metahero attend their event generates. So it's not surprising that there were half a dozen metahumans in attendance at Candlestick Park on October 3, 1989, when an earthquake of magnitude 7.1 on the Richter scale struck San Francisco.

James Robinson was also in San Francisco that afternoon, but had no time for baseball; he was to address a meeting of the California Medical Association that evening. When the earthquake hit, he was driving a rental car on the upper deck of I-880 and narrowly missed driving his car onto a collapsed section of the highway. Of course, he immediately got out of the car and began tending to the sick and wounded — just as the various metahumans at Candlestick Park were leaving to see what had happened.

Something — no one knows whether it was the earthquake itself, or the suffering of those below — attracted the attention of another being, and the Blue Demon (see p. SU71) suddenly appeared in the sky above Oakland.

The metahumans' mission is to protect the Physician (one of them will recognize him) while driving away the Blue Demon. The Physician has no offensive powers, and anything he can hide behind, the Blue Demon can tear away.

RAN SoM

ST 13 (30 points)

DX 13 (30 points)

Speed: 6.25

Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1

IQ 11 (10 points)

HT 12 (20 points)

Move: 7 (12 Gliding)

Appearance: Male human, ethnic Arab, age 28, 6' 2", 190 lbs., black hair, brown eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)

Alertness +2 (10 points)

Attractive (5 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Comfortable Wealth (10 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Reputation: +2 with large class (5 points)

Strong Will +3 (12 points)

Unusual Background (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Bloodlust (-10 points)

Jinxed (-20 points)

No Sense of Humor (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Secret: Identity (-30 points)

Sense of Duty: Hostages (-10 points)

Vow: To rescue all hostages (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Flight (Gliding -5; 20 points)

Infravision (15 points)

Insubstantiality (Affects Others +4; Can affect heavy encumbrance +10; No Concentration +2; Switchable +1; Touch Only -2; 188 points)

Invisibility (Can affect heavy encumbrance +10; Switchable +1; 84 points)

Invisibility to Machines (Can affect heavy encumbrance +10; Switchable +1; 53 points)

Psionic Resistance +10 (20 points)

Skills:

Acrobatics-11 (1 point); Arabic-11 (0 points); Armoury (Guns)-12 (4 points); Brawling-15 (4 points); Broadsword-12 (1 point); Climbing-14 (4 points); English-11 (0 points); Fast-Draw (Magazine)-14 (2 points); Fast-Draw (Knife)-14 (2 points); Fast-Draw (Pistol)-14 (2 points); Fast-Draw (Submachine gun)-14 (2 points); First Aid-12 (2 points); Guns (Pistol)-16 (4 points); Guns (Revolver)-15 (2 points); Guns (Submachine gun)-16 (4 points); Knife-16 (8 points); Knife Throwing-15 (4 points); Running-9 (1/2 point); Speed-Load-14 (2 points); Stealth-14 (4 points); Streetwise-11 (2 points); Tactics-8 (1/2 point)

Quirks:

Plays soccer when he gets the chance

Never drinks alcohol (though he does like pork)

Listens to classical music (both Arabic and Western)

Likes old cars (he drives a '53 Pontiac)

Prefers to work alone



Story

Robert Haseem is the son of Palestinian immigrants who met and married after they arrived in the United States. They started a small store which sold Greek and Middle Eastern foods; by the time Robert was born, it was a modest success.

Robert grew up speaking both Arabic and English. His childhood was more or less normal until the sixth grade, when one of his parents' employees went mad and took them hostage. The SWAT team negotiated with him for almost 24 hours before they stormed the building, but they were unable to prevent the gunman from killing himself and the Haseems.

Young Robert took this very hard. He had been an outgoing, happy child, but now was sullen and uncommunicative. Part of the problem was his home environment; after his parents' death, he was placed in the home of a very strict uncle and his wife. Where Robert's parents had been indifferent to religion, his uncle and aunt were Sunni Moslems who were determined that Robert would practice Islam. They even gave him an Arabic name, and would not call him anything but Rashid.

Robert withdrew inside himself, playing out scenarios in his mind where he defeated the gunman and rescued his parents. One recurring fantasy involved his walking through a wall; whether this fantasy triggered his latent powers or was a message from his subconscious was unknown, but one day in a fit of

anger he put his hand through a wall — without leaving a hole. He soon learned that he was able to walk through walls, taking with him anything he was physically in contact with, and could make himself invisible as well. His guardians never knew this; on his fifteenth birthday they told him that his refusal to submit to Islam marked him as a creature of Satan and threw him out.

Moving in with a friend who had dropped out of school, Robert's disposition improved remarkably with the knowledge that he had the means to avenge his parents' death in some way, and that he no longer had to submit to his uncle's discipline. He had a small inheritance from his parents' business which he used to buy an old car, two pistols and several throwing knives. He practiced as often as he could with them, and would often drive up into the hills above Los Angeles for target practice.

His first adventure happened almost by accident. He was returning from a trip to the hills when he drove past a posh hotel surrounded by at least a dozen squad cars. No one would tell him what was happening, but the local all-news station reported that a gunman inside the hotel had hostages and claimed to have a bomb as well. He was demanding an unspecified ransom and free passage to Cuba.

That was all the information Robert needed. He turned insubstantial and invisible, grabbed a pistol, walked through the police barricade and entered the hotel. After checking to see if any explosives were present (none were), he entered the hotel restaurant, where the kidnapper was holed up, and rematerialized facing the gunman with his back to the hostages.

The gunman turned to see Robert standing in front of him. It spooked him, and he raised his weapon, but not fast enough. Robert put a bullet through the man's stomach.

The kidnapper fell to the floor, dropping his weapon and looking up in surprise at the rescuer. "Who are you?" he gasped.

Robert raised his gun to the man's head. "I guess you could say I'm the ransom," he replied, and pulled the trigger.

Robert immediately turned invisible and left the scene, not waiting for the gratitude of those he had rescued. None of the hostages got a good look at him, although they described him as wearing dark clothes and having curly brown hair. The local news media had a field day describing the unknown vigilante known as the "Ransom."

Once he returned to his apartment, Robert began to "post-mortem" his actions (something he would do after every encounter, and which he feels is part of his secret for staying alive). First, he decided he should have killed the kidnapper immediately upon his return to substantiality. Second, it was foolish of him to talk; he might in the future be identified by his voiceprint, and the time wasted could have cost him his life. Third, in the future he would not drive to the scene of the crime, his car was far too noticeable and could be traced.

The Ransom appeared several times over the next year in the Los Angeles area. Public opinion on him was divided; some branded him a cold-hearted vigilante who should be brought to justice, while others pointed out that he had never taken an innocent life and his use of force had always been justified. The police would have been bound by law to arrest him if they ever captured him, but most LAPD officers sincerely hope they never have the opportunity.

One of the people Ransom rescued was a wealthy businessman who offered him a \$250,000 reward if he would claim it. Robert negotiated payment of the reward through Supertemps and gave them a 10% commission for their trouble. Though he prefers to work alone, and almost never works except in hostage situations, he has assisted Supertemps on a number of cases.

Any reward money he receives is paid through them (giving Supertemps 10%, of course).

Campaign Role

The Ransom can provide an added complication for characters during hostage situations. Groups whose members adhere to traditional, heroic ethics will likely butt heads with the relative cold-bloodedness of the Ransom. Even characters willing to kill as readily as the Ransom will likely disagree on specific tactics. The Ransom also goes after terrorists in the United States, so he could show up during an anti-terrorist adventure.

Personality

Robert Haseem is a driven individual. His goal is to save the lives of hostages; other considerations are secondary. Robert adheres to his own set of ethics. He has no sense of humor, and works well with others only if it serves his larger purpose. He is a profoundly lonely man, but he shoves this aside in order to get his job done.

Abilities

The Ransom is able to turn his entire body, and anything he is wearing or carrying, insubstantial. While insubstantial he is able to glide, albeit somewhat clumsily. He is also able to make himself invisible at will, but only if he is also insubstantial; therefore, he must become visible in order to launch any attack. He also has infravision, which functions whether he is substantial or not. His focused willpower also imparts some measure of protection from psionic attack, though Robert is unaware of this.

Battle Tactics

Robert always carries a Colt .45 automatic pistol and two large knives. When going into action as the Ransom, he carries an Ingram SMG, two Colt .45s, several knives, spare ammunition, and he wears protective armor. Usually he wears Kevlar, but if faced with multiple opponents he will use light body armor. His face is always covered.

Ransom will investigate a situation first, locating the hostages and their captor(s). He will then walk into the room, invisible and insubstantial. He seldom tries to take captives; he believes the world is best rid of such men. His favorite tactic is to solidify right behind his opponent, kill him with the pistol, then disappear again. The Ingram is a last resort, used only in situations involving multiple captors. Robert's main concern is hostage safety, and he will not act if he thinks his actions will harm innocent people.

Adventure Seed: Find the Ransom

By all appearances, the Ransom is widening his field of activities. Several times in the last few weeks, convenience store robberies have been thwarted by a man wearing a ski mask who suddenly appeared, shot the bandit, and then disappeared again. Because the mysterious vigilante is invisible (and apparently insubstantial — proximity detectors have not registered his presence) and because he uses a Colt .45, the authorities think the Ransom might be responsible and want him brought in for questioning.

Ransom is *not* responsible for the vigilante shootings — ballistic analysis of the Colt .45 the assailant used shows it is not the weapon Ransom normally uses, though the police think he may be using two different guns. He *is* interested in finding out who is using his *modus operandi*, however, and the PCs may have to find the gunman — if only to save his life!

SANDBLASTER

ST 10 (0 points)

IQ 13 (30 points)

DX 13 (30 points)

HT 10 (0 points)

Speed: 5.75

Move: 5

Damage: Stone Missile 7d+2; Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Female human, white, age 24, 5' 5", 100 lbs., shoulder-length brown hair, green eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Attractive (5 points)

Comfortable Wealth (10 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Patron: Supertemps on 6 or less (15 points)

Strong Will +2 (8 points)

Disadvantages:

Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)

Enemy: Various villains on 9 or less (-30 points)

Greed (-15 points)

Impulsiveness (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Pacifism: Self-defense only (-15 points)

Stubbornness (-5 points)

Vow: Never shrink from a challenge (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Body of Earth (Switchable +1; 44 points)

Costume (20 points)

Damage Resistance +22 (Switchable +1; 121 points)

Move Through Earth (Based on Move Through Ice, Switchable +1; 27 points)

Power and Super-Skills:

Earth Power 12 (120 points)

Chains of Earth-15 (No Concentration +2; Rapid Fire +3; 36 points)

Mold Earth-12 (8 points)

Sand Jet-15 (No Concentration +2; 32 points)

Stone Missile-16 (Armor Piercing×2 +8; No Concentration +2; 68 points)

Skills:

Accounting-13 (4 points); Administration-17 (10 points); Computer Operation-13 (1 point); Detect Lies-12 (2 points); Economics-12 (2 points); Spanish-12 (1 point); Japanese-13 (2 points); Merchant-13 (2 points); Savoir-Faire-14 (2 points)

Quirks:

Only drinks bottled, imported beer

Has set her sights on a green Jaguar XJ-6

Doesn't cook

Won't eat red meat

Works out at fitness centers

Story

Even though she had metahuman powers from a very early age, Kelly Lyons had a very normal childhood — primarily because her parents discouraged her from using those powers.

Characters



At a very early age she was able to shift soil and sand with the power of her mind, and by age four she had discovered she was able to turn her body to earth!

Using various threats, bribes and explanations, Kelly's parents got her to keep her powers a secret. They even went so far as to never let her play in a playground with a sandbox! She followed her parent's wishes, for the most part; kids at school who picked on her occasionally tripped for no apparent reason.

Kelly developed a strong sense of self-confidence, and grew up believing there wasn't anything she couldn't do. Fortunately, she was willing to work hard to fulfill this attitude; she excelled at school and was in the forefront of most social activities. In fact, the only people who didn't like her were the ones who had been on the receiving end of her powers.

After she graduated from high school, Kelly went to a local university. Even with a small scholarship and living at home to minimize her expenses, her parents could barely afford to keep her in college, so she worked at various part-time jobs her freshman year.

College was harder than she expected, but she buckled down and made good grades. Her only problem was the jobs she

worked at; she felt there must be a more dignified way for a business major to earn money than slinging burgers and sweeping out the basketball arena.

In her sophomore year, she decided to do something about it and applied to Supertemps. She explained that she would take either an administrative job that she could count as business experience, or a metahuman job that involved her earth-moving power. She didn't know what they would have her do or what it would pay, but whatever it was had to be better than making french fries.

As it turned out, Kelly worked in the office three afternoons a week and did jobs for the Industrial Division when she could take time off from her studies. She adopted a costume and a name ("Sandblaster"), mostly to hide her new job from her parents. She tackled a number of jobs, from sandblasting the sides of buildings to earth-moving to judging a sand-castle-building competition.

One Saturday afternoon, Kelly received a call to join a Defense Squad that was trying to end a hostage crisis downtown. She was more than a little worried about the idea of going into combat, but decided not to let fear dictate her actions. In spite of her lack of combat training, she did fairly well but decided that a career as a full-time crime fighter wasn't for her. Still, she expected that she would be called into service occasionally, and started reading Sam Mitchell's *The Metahuman in Combat* (see p. 61).

Kelly's parents found out about her affiliation with Supertemps by accident one day when she left her copy of *The Metahuman in Combat* in the front room. She told her parents the entire truth — she was assigned to the Industrial Division, but had served on a Defense Squad once and wanted to learn more about it. They were disappointed to learn that Kelly was using her metahuman powers, but happy that she was using them for good purposes and not in combat and decided that at some point they had to let her make her own decisions. Still, they worry, and often when Kelly is out of the house her mother will turn on the all-news radio channel to listen for reports of metahuman activity.

The money Kelly was making at Supertemps was just enough to keep her in school without relying on her parents for support. Tragedy almost struck, however; the plant her father had worked at for the past 24 years closed. She was now the family's sole support, other than a meager pension, and was afraid she would have to drop out of school in order to support her family.

Kelly told the local Supertemps office manager of her situation. The office manager made a phone call to a friend of hers — Linda Ravenhair (Astronaut, p. 16). Ravenhair had established several scholarships for female students, and one was available for the upcoming year. Kelly applied immediately and was approved; now Kelly could go to school and support her family until her father could get back to work.

Her last two years of undergraduate work went well. She was no longer at the top of her class, but she was close and had no trouble getting accepted into a prestigious business school, where she continued to do well and eventually received her MBA.

Kelly had met Linda Ravenhair through the scholarship program. The two found they had similar interests and goals, and became friends. Linda was impressed with Kelly's drive and her business savvy, and offered her a job upon her graduation. Linda needed someone to oversee her scholarship program, and who better than someone who had been associated with it as a beneficiary?

During all this time, Kelly continued to work as Sandblaster, mostly in Industrial Division jobs but increasingly in the Guardian Division. Today she is in charge of the Ravenhair Scholarship Program, but still takes quite a bit of time off to do jobs for Supertemps. Since her boss is a fellow metahuman, however, this is not a problem.

Campaign Role

Characters who went to business school may remember Kelly Lyons as an ambitious student. PCs in need of a scholarship may be interviewed by her. Later meetings could take place on the battlefield, when Sandblaster aids a local super-team.

Personality

Kelly Lyons is a supremely confident individual. She refuses to admit that she has limitations which cannot be overcome. Her straight-ahead, no-nonsense style unnerves many people. She has little patience for those who aren't as driven as she. She will not hesitate to get what she wants, and rarely lets up.

Kelly would rather be straightforward about her powers — she doesn't like running around in a mask and costume — but she keeps her identity secret out of consideration for her parents. She's afraid that if a meta-villain knew who she was, he might take her parents hostage. Or worse.

Abilities

Sandblaster is able to manipulate earth with her mind. She can shape it, or project it in a high-velocity stream (hence her code name). She is also able to transform herself into a body made of sandy soil. While in this shape she can move through the ground, and alter her configuration as well. She has a strong sense of control, which gives her good resistance to damage. Her control is limited to dirt and sand; she cannot affect stone or mud.

Battle Tactics

Sandblaster is essentially an amateur combatant. She is trying to learn the ropes, but does not yet have a good tactical sense. She makes more mistakes than she likes to admit; for instance, she will sometimes use Chains of Earth against strong opponents who are not likely to be held.

Her usual procedure is to bind enemies first, then go to the Sand Jet or Stone Missile. She will occasionally Move Through Earth to gain surprise, but not often.

Adventure Seed: Close to Home

As mentioned above, Sandblaster keeps her identity secret — partially because her parents don't really approve of her activities, but also because she's afraid that if any of the villains she has fought were to discover that she had a family, they would be in danger.

One day, the inevitable happens. A meta-villain puts two and two together and deduces Sandblaster's identity, then kidnaps her parents and demands that Supertemps pay a \$1,000,000 ransom for their return.

But when Kelly calls her house, her mother answers the phone! The meta-villain was wrong in his assessment of who Sandblaster actually was. She will have to find out who the meta-villain *really* kidnapped, make sure that whoever he thinks is Sandblaster is safe, and then try to rescue the innocent parents — probably with a Defense Squad, since she is not yet sure of her abilities as a combatant.

Sea Hawk

ST 20 (106 points)

DX 15 (60 points)

Speed: 7.00

Damage: Karate 2d punch, 2d+2/2d+4 kick; Thrust 2d-1; Swing 3d+2

Appearance: Female human, white, age 26, 5' 7", 130 lbs., long, pale-blond hair, blue eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Absolute Direction (5 points)

Acute Vision +5 (10 points)

Attractive (5 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Night Vision (10 points)

Reputation: +2 in the Seattle area on 10 or less (5 points)

Strong Will +2 (8 points)

Disadvantages:

Dependent: Mother on 6 or less (-12 points)

Duty: Coast Guard on 12 or less (-10 points)

Honesty (-10 points)

Impulsiveness (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Pacifism: Self-defense only (-15 points)

Secret: Identity (-5 points)

Sense of Duty: Those in trouble (-10 points)

Vow: Will never refuse a request for aid (-10 points)

Super Advantages:

Amphibious (20 points)

Doesn't Breathe (30 points)

Flight (40 points)

Nictating Membrane (15 points)

Pressure Support (20 points)

Regeneration: Regular (25 points)

Super Flight×2 (40 points)

Super Swimming×2 (30 points)

Temperature Tolerance (10 points)

Super Disadvantage:

Vulnerability: 2d from Vibratory attacks (-10 points)

Super Equipment:

Claws: Crushing (No Concentration +2; Switchable +1; 20 points)

Damage Resistance +8 (No Obvious Effect +3; 52 points)

Skills:

Acrobatics-15 (4 points); Area Knowledge (Seattle)-14 (6 points); Electronics Operation (Radios)-14 (8 points); First Aid-15 (8 points); Gesture-11 (1 point); Judo-13 (1 point); Karate-15 (4 points); Meteorology-9 (1 point); Navigation-11 (4 points); Professional Skill (Air and Sea Rescue Techniques)-14 (6 points); Survival (Island/Beach)-11 (2 points); Survival (Woods)-10 (1 point)



Quirks:

Atheist

Science fiction fan (reads every SF novel she can get her hands on)

Loves mint chocolate Girl Scout cookies; buys a case a year

Plays practical jokes (but *not* when she's working)

Claims she'll reveal her secret identity when the Seahawks win the Super Bowl

Story

Katherine Swensen's childhood in Klamath Falls, Oregon, was rather uneventful — or so it seemed to the adults around her. The kids she played with knew better; she was stronger than all of the other girls, and most of the boys. No one dared pick on Katherine and her friends.

Katherine's mother disapproved of school sports, so Kathy found an outlet in sand-lot baseball and Girl Scouts. She loved the outdoors and went camping whenever possible. Once, on a camping trip, she and another girl went out exploring on their own against the orders of their leader. They strayed too close to a cliff and the ground gave way under Katherine's companion's feet. Kathy somehow managed to grab onto her, but was pulled down as well. They started sliding down the cliff, when suddenly the downward motion ceased and they started sliding *uphill*. Katherine was *flying*!

Katherine swore the other girl to secrecy about what happened; she needed time to figure out what to do with her new “gift.” Her parents were openly critical of metahumans (Katherine often heard the words “freak” and “abomination”), but like most teenagers, some of Katherine’s heroes were metahumans, and she decided to use her power to help others if she could.

She practiced flying when she could; in order to avoid being spotted, she improvised a costume and usually only flew in the early mornings, out in the back woods along the front range of the Cascades. She also paid for martial arts training; she explained to her parents that she didn’t plan to live in Klamath Falls forever, and the big city was a dangerous place to live. She was an excellent student and her teacher encouraged her to enter tournaments, but again, she declined to avoid confrontations with her parents.

After high school, Katherine enrolled at Oregon State University. Out of the shadow of her parents, she began making friends and her grades improved noticeably. In addition, she continued her flying and martial arts practice.

That spring, while most of the students at Oregon State went to the nearby beaches for spring break, Katherine and her friends went to Puget Sound, where one of the girls’ parents owned a boat. As they cruised among the islands in the Sound, Katherine thought she saw another small craft in trouble. A few moments later she spotted smoke; the other boat was obviously on fire. The girls altered course to help, but they would not be able to reach the other boat for several minutes.

As Katherine watched the swiftly burning vessel through the boat’s telescope, she saw a man, a woman and a small boy leap overboard to avoid the flames. They had no time to grab a life preserver, and it was clear they had trouble staying afloat. Katherine grabbed three life vests from her craft and flew to the rescue — much to the surprise of her companions!

When she reached the family, Katherine dropped two of the life vests, then grabbed the child and flew him back to safety on her boat. As she flew back to rescue the adults, she saw the stricken boat explode. As she approached the area, she couldn’t find the man or woman. Without hesitation she dove into the water.

Though a good swimmer, Katherine had never spent much time underwater. That didn’t affect her much, however, as she swiftly located both of the boy’s parents, brought them to the surface and kept them afloat until her boat arrived. The girls radioed the Coast Guard, who arrived within minutes to administer first aid and investigate the accident. Katherine was not yet ready for the publicity that her metahuman powers would generate, though, so she asked her friends to keep her role in the incident a secret.

Something unusual had happened while Kathleen was underwater; she had stayed underwater for more than ten minutes and hadn’t needed to breathe! She tested this out over the rest of the spring break and found that she could fly as easily underwater as she could through the air. She finished up the semester at Oregon State, then moved to Seattle to work with the Supertemps branch there.

Supertemps was delighted to have her; Seattle was a major port and, while safer than many other ports, had its share of accidents. Kathleen designed a costume, bought a scanner that would cover harbor and Coast Guard activities and went to work. She was occasionally sighted around the Puget Sound area; when a humor columnist for the *Post-Intelligencer* wrote that her blue-and-green costume reminded him of a Seattle Seahawks football uniform, people began calling this new super

the “Sea Hawk.” Katherine didn’t mind; the name was rather exciting, and besides, she was a closet Seahawks fan.

At first, her actions weren’t entirely appreciated — she was shot at twice by smugglers and the Coast Guard accused her of interfering in their activities, but after negotiations with Supertemps and several notable successes, the Coast Guard made Sea Hawk a reserve officer on special assignment. Today she occasionally patrols the area, but usually works on special assignment; she most recently worked with a Supertemps Guardian Division group from Victoria, British Columbia, which broke up a counterfeit-goods smuggling ring.

Campaign Role

Sea Hawk could become involved in any seagoing adventure. Characters in trouble on the ocean may find Sea Hawk aiding in their rescue. Though she operates primarily in the Pacific Northwest, she enjoys travel and will go anywhere she feels she’s needed.

Katherine might also become involved in a land-based investigation of drug smugglers that are bringing their illicit cargo in over sea routes. She is easy to work with, and does her best to fit in with whatever team she is assigned to.

Personality

Katherine Swenson *likes* wearing a costume, helping people and solving crimes. She would probably do it even if she weren’t paid; she really likes the fact that she makes enough money working for Supertemps to live on so she doesn’t have to interrupt a “day job.”

Sea Hawk does everything she can to prevent anyone from dying as a result of one of her actions (or as a result of inaction) and is depressed when she can’t save someone. She tends to have few friends, but is very close to those few.

Every once in a while, Sea Hawk does something just because she feels like it — like buzzing the crowd during Seahawk games. Occasionally she will fly up to the observation deck of the Space Needle, tell the gawking tourists “I didn’t feel like paying to take the elevator,” and leave. When she works, though, she’s all business.

Abilities

The Sea Hawk’s primary ability is flight at speeds of up to 100 miles per hour. She doesn’t know how she does this, as she has never subjected herself to study. This same power allows her to “fly” underwater at up to 50 miles per hour; in addition, her body is also able to function normally underwater. She is also stronger than most normal humans, perhaps as a side effect of her ability to withstand high pressure.

The body armor and “talons” were later additions to Sea Hawk’s arsenal, added after a particularly nasty fight with some smugglers. During missions she usually carries 50 feet of rope and a portable two-way marine radio.

Battle Tactics

Generally Sea Hawk tries to avoid combat situations; of course, this isn’t always possible. If her opponents are armed she will immediately take cover, then use her movement powers in an effort to sneak up on one adversary. She will attempt to disarm him if she can strike from surprise, and then go on to the next foe.

Katherine does not like to use her talons, and will depend on her strength and flight as much as possible, using the talons only as a last resort.

SKYLORD

ST 10 (0 points) IQ 15 (60 points)
 DX 12 (20 points) HT 12 (20 points)
 Speed: 6.00 Move: 6 (80 flying)
 Damage: Electro-Blaster 5d imp (stun); Thrust 1d-2; Swing 1d

Appearance: Male human, white, age 39, 5' 11", 170 lbs., black hair, blue eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Absolute Timing (5 points)
 Attractive (5 points)
 Eidetic Memory (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Absent-Mindedness (-15 points)
 Compulsive Behavior: Insatiable curiosity (-10 points)
 Enemy: TRADE on 9 or less (-30 points)
 Gullibility (-10 points)
 Honesty (-10 points)
 Overconfidence (-10 points)
 Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)
 Vow: To improve the quality of life through technology (-5 points)

Super Advantage:

Gadgeteer (25 points)

Super Equipment:

Concussion Beam (Breakable: DR 10, HP 50 -15%; Can Be Hit at -6 -10%; 95 points)

Air Power 4

Wind Jet-16 (Increased Range +3; Link +1)

Body Control Power 7

Confuse-16 (Link +1)

Electro Blaster (Breakable: DR 30, HP 90 -5%; Can Be Hit at -6 -5%; 135 points)

Electrical Power 10

Lightning-18 (Accuracy $\times 4$ +4; Armor Piercing +4; No Concentration +2; Stun Damage Only -2)

Force-Field Generator (Breakable: DR 10, HP 10 -15%; Can Be Hit at -10 -0%; 79 points)

Force Field Power 10 (bought as Generic Full Defense)

Force Field-16

Force Field Power +5 (Generic Physical Defense)

Jet Boots (Breakable: DR 15, HP 60 -15%; Can Be Hit at -6 -10%; 75 points)

Flight

Super Flight $\times 3$

P-Bombs (Can Be Stolen by Contest of DX -30%; 20 points)

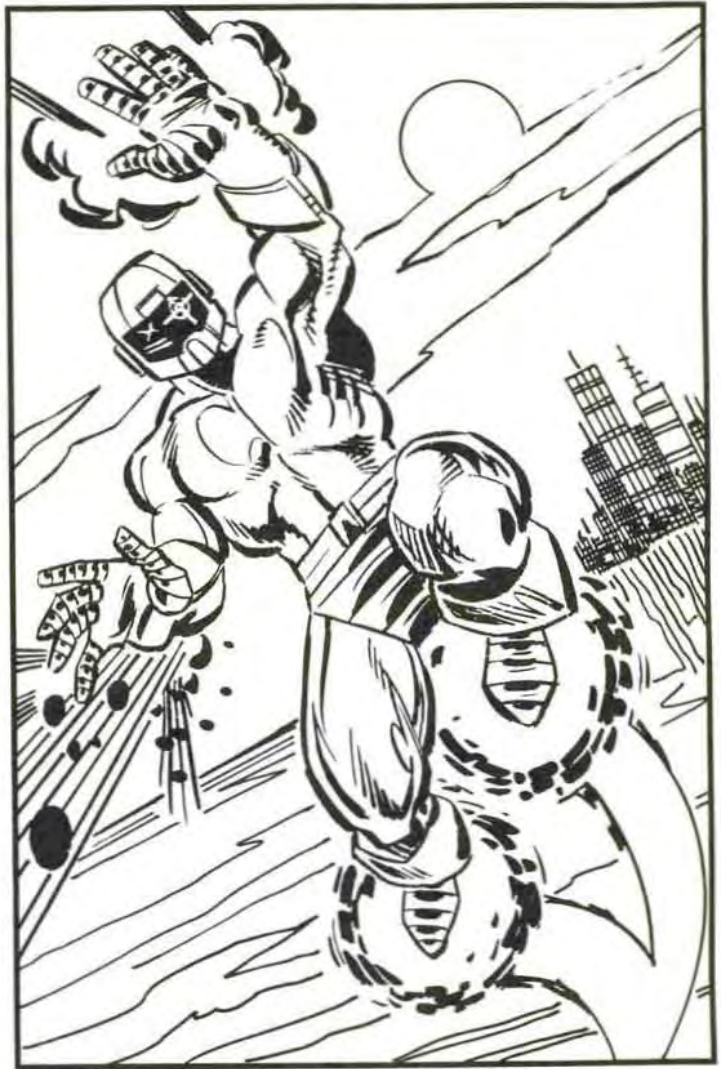
Anti-Psi Power 6

Psi Static-16 (Limited Use: 2 per day -3)

Smoke Grenades (Can Be Stolen by Contest of DX -30%; 18 points)

Air Power 6

Smoke-16 (Limited Use: 2 per day -3; Touch Only -2)



Skills:

Administration-9 (0 points); Area Knowledge (Denver)-15 (1 point); Armoury (Beam weaponry)-18 (4 points); Armoury (Psi weaponry)-15 (1/2 point); Brawling-11 (1/2 point); Chemistry-14 (1 point); Computer Operation-15 (1/2 point); Computer Programming-14 (1 point); Electronics (Force fields)-16 (3 points); First Aid-15 (1/2 point); Mathematics-15 (2 points); Metallurgy-13 (1/2 point); Nuclear Physics-13 (1 point); Physics-15 (2 points); Research-15 (1 point)

Quirks:

Loves baseball, doesn't care for any other sports
 Listens to country music, especially when he feels morose
 Often visits the Grand Canyon, flying through the passages
 Doesn't sell his patents, just holds on to them
 Dedicated bird watcher

Story

Throughout his life, Amos Tolnin has always found it easier to deal with science and numbers than with people. People are unpredictable, but science follows a definite set of rules. The troubles in Amos' life have come about when he trusted people to behave in ways he thought they should, rather than whatever way they pleased.

Sometimes this has worked in Amos' favor. As a boy he genuinely *liked* school; while this got him branded a "nerd," it helped him concentrate on his studies. Strangely, it also gained him respect in high school. At the time the U.S. was neck and neck with the Soviet Union in the Space Race, and Amos' high school yearbook predicted he would someday work for NASA.

The prediction was correct, but oddly enough, Amos went to work for NASA's *aeronautical* division. The space program was in its infancy, while aeronautical technology was already at a high level and offered more chances for exciting new ideas that would increase an aircraft's performance — what test pilots call "pushing the envelope."

Several years later, Amos first heard of an organization called TRADE (see p. SS50). His initial reaction was disbelief — technology was supposed to *improve* the quality of life, and these people were selling it to high-tech murderers and bandits! When a TRADE scout contacted Tolnin to feel him out about working for TRADE, Tolnin sent the man packing with a bloody nose.

Tolnin soon came up with the idea of a technological consortium devoted to aiding humanity and reducing crime. His new company would be called STAR (Science, Technology and Applied Research) and would recruit the best minds available to design and develop crime-fighting technology. He certainly had the contacts gained through years of attendance at technical conferences, but at first could only persuade a few to join (including Dr. Vincent Kyriakados — see p. 44).

This didn't deter Amos; after all, there was nothing wrong with starting small. Unfortunately, STAR *stayed* small. It suffered from a chronic lack of leadership and faltered as its members researched their pet projects. There was little communication and even less cooperation.

The members of STAR left, one by one, until only Tolnin was left. He never acknowledged to the media that STAR was in trouble until the day his lawyers advised him to file Chapter 11.

In the meantime, Dr. Kyriakados had become the costumed super known as the Nucleus. He enjoyed being a super, and invited Amos to do the same. At first he declined, but one night over dinner, Nucleus explained that being a super was exactly what Amos had in mind when he started STAR — helping mankind on an individual basis, through technology.

When it was put to him in that way, Amos could hardly refuse. He went to his files, dusted off some reports and research he'd filed away years ago and began to design his arsenal. By the next evening he had plans for a set of jet boots, a gloved concussion beam — and a name: "Skylord."

At Nucleus' urging, Skylord signed on with the Guardian Division of Supertemps and requested to be assigned to Phoenix, Arizona. Supertemps' planners resisted at first, worried that two gadget-powered heroes defending the same city would present an exploitable weakness, but Nucleus was able to convince them to go ahead with the assignment.

Skylord and Nucleus make a good pair, and they become even better as Skylord adds new devices to his inventory. Some, like his force field and Kevlar-reinforced suit, are standard parts of his equipment; others he uses only once or twice, mostly to demonstrate their use to potential customers.

Campaign Role

Not everyone recognizes the name Dr. Amos Tolnin, but many people *do* know about STAR (especially its crash). Player characters may have been members of, or invited to join, STAR, if they have any scientific notoriety at all. Even if they refused the offer or left the company in frustration, Amos will be amiable — he doesn't waste his time with petty bickering.

Campaigns that have a need for a gadgeteer may make good use of Skylord. He doesn't have any reservations about loaning out some of his inventions, and would welcome the opportunity to design a specific gadget for a super — provided, of course, that he retains all rights to the invention.

Personality

Amos Tolnin is a likable fellow. Sometimes his head is in the clouds, to be sure, but he tries not to overwhelm his audience with jargon. In fact, there's very little not to like about this man (for anyone not working for him, at any rate).

Despite his vast intelligence, Amos is a pathetic leader. Worse, he doesn't seem to recognize this fact. He'll cheerfully accept a position of authority, then sit back and expect everything to work out by itself. His lack of interpersonal skills is potentially amusing until cooperation is required; then it becomes a serious obstacle.

Abilities

Amos chose the name Skylord because he wanted to project an image of mastery over flight. Though not the fastest super, his jet boots give him a speed advantage over most opponents Skylord encounters.

His left gauntlet houses his initial offensive weapon, the concussion beam. Aimed at a single target, it can stun an opponent and knock him back. The Increased Range enhancement (+3) doubles the Wind Jet's normal range.

The second ranged attack is located in the right gauntlet. Skylord insists that his own attacks are non-lethal (and prefers his teammates' to be as well). The Electro Blaster was designed with this humane goal as well as greater attack strength in mind. Though the basic damage is not large, this impaling, armor-piercing attack is particularly effective against Kevlar-equipped foes (as well as the unarmored).

The force field supplements, rather than replaces, Skylord's standard Kevlar costume. The generator is unnoticeable underneath his costume at the waist. Unfortunately, the act of activating the shield gives away the gadget's concealed location.

The smoke grenades and P-Bombs appear almost identical. Both are small spheres, about the size of a baseball, with an activation switch and safety mechanism.

Battle Tactics

Skylord usually attempts to reason with his opponent while flying around. This is partly to show off and partly to make himself difficult to hit. In any case, when this doesn't work he will opt for the concussion beam (the force field will be activated as soon as trouble is suspected).

Villains stunned with this beam are finished off with the Electro Blaster. If a heavily armored foe proves unusually resistant to the concussion beam, Skylord will attempt a retreat, aided with smoke grenades and possibly P-Bombs. He will use his P-Bombs immediately if a known hostile psi is involved.

Power Variations

250-point version: Drop Attractive; drop Concussion Beam; drop Force Field Generator; lower Super Flight to $\times 1$; drop P-Bombs; drop Armoury (Psi weaponry) skill; lower Armoury (Beam weaponry) skill level to 15; drop Brawling skill; drop Electronics (Force fields) skill.

750-point version: Convert all equipment to Unbreakable; raise Force Field Power to 30; drop additional Force Field Power (Generic Physical Defense); raise Super Flight to $\times 7$ (gives Mach 3.5!); drop Area Knowledge skill.

Timekeeper

ST 30 (126 points)

IQ 12 (20 points)

DX 14 (45 points)

HT 13 (30 points)

Speed: 6.75

Move: 8 (16 running)

Damage: Staff 3d+2/7d+3 thrust, 6d/9d swing; Thrust 3d/7d+1; Swing 5d+2/9d+2

Appearance: Male extraterrestrial (facial features are a combination of Oriental and Caucasian, leaning toward the former), age 30, 6' 4", 200 lbs., short black hair, gold eyes, lightly scaled blue-green skin.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Alertness +4 (20 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Danger Sense (15 points)

High Pain Threshold (10 points)

Strong Will +1 (4 points)

Disadvantages:

No Sense of Humor (-10 points)

Overconfidence (-10 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Secret: The Timekeeper is an alien (-10 points)

Sense of Duty: To close friends and companions (-5 points)

Ugly (-10 points)

Vow: Protect the defenseless (-10 points)

Weirdness Magnet (-15 points)



Before they could do this, however, a warrior named Karant Rynkom organized a strike force and staged a daring raid, recapturing the machine. As a reward, he and his heirs were appointed permanent guardians of the machine and given the title Kwindkom, which means "guardian of time" or "timekeeper." As time passed, the title became more ceremonial than actual, but the timekeepers continued to guard the machine.

They discharged their duty for many years until a well-organized group from a renegade clan again decided to try to take the machine. The timekeepers fought as hard as they could, but the renegades overpowered them and made their way into the chamber where the machine was kept. Artral Kwindkom, the captain of the timekeepers, saw his duty clearly; he had to keep the machine out of the renegades' hands, no matter what the cost. As the rebels approached the machine, Artral smashed it.

As he did so, the machine exploded. The blast knocked him out; it also created a temporary rift in the space-time continuum which deposited him in 20th-century West Virginia.

Clarence Hall, a retired lawyer, lived alone on a small plot of land in central West Virginia, miles away from the nearest neighbor. One day he was sitting on his front porch, when he heard a loud *bang* on the hillside behind his home. When he went to look, he found Artral. He wasn't sure what to make of the scaly, blue-green man, but he looked alive and hurt so he brought him home and cared for him.

At first, the relationship was tense. Neither of the two knew what to make of the other; Hall kept his shotgun close at hand for the first month and the alien slept (figuratively) with one eye open. He soon regained his health and began adjusting to his new surroundings — especially the language, which he practiced for over a year before he could make himself understood.

Artral remained on Hall's property the entire time, his only contact with the world outside coming from books, newspapers and satellite TV. He was a warrior by birth and training, and there seemed to be much on this new planet worth fighting for and against. Unfortunately, most of the fighting seemed to be done by "governments" of one sort or another, and Hall convinced him that revealing his existence to any of these governments would be a bad idea.

One of Hall's magazines mentioned a new organization called Supertemps. He suggested that Artral contact them and join a Defense Squad; that would give him plenty of fighting in a good cause. Hall used his contacts to create a new identity for Artral, "Tom Kelly." His abnormal appearance was blamed on the catastrophic changes that gave him his powers.

Artral joined Supertemps and took the name "Timekeeper" (TK for short). They assigned him to a Defense Squad based in Cincinnati. He quickly gained the respect of the other members of the team but not their friendship; his peculiar manner and lack of a sense of humor disturbed his teammates.

Timekeeper quickly learned about his adopted planet and its cultures and languages. After he had worked for Supertemps for six months, he took a brief vacation to visit Clarence Hall back in West Virginia. At that time he learned about something new: terminal cancer. Hall only had a few weeks to live.

Artral took a leave of absence to be with his friend in his few remaining days. Hall had no close relatives, so he decided to will his modest estate to "Tom Kelly." The alien was honored by this, and when Hall died, Artral performed a Rynkarian death ritual reserved for family and close friends.

When he returned to active duty, Artral did his best but was unable to contain his grief. His teammates could easily relate to this emotion. Since Hall's passing, the other members of the squad have finally warmed to Timekeeper. He still has not told

them the final truth about himself, however — that he is from another planet.

Nor has he told them something else he recently learned: in a recent report of metahuman activity, one of the descriptions sounded alarmingly like that of a Rynkarian! He had always assumed the space-time rift had only affected him, or possibly sent others to different planets; now he supposed it was possible that other Rynkarians had appeared on Earth.

Timekeeper immediately took a leave of absence from the Cincinnati group and is now traveling from city to city, looking for evidence which will conclusively confirm or repudiate the suspicious report.

Campaign Role

The Timekeeper travels constantly, looking for other Rynkarians; he could easily meet up with the player characters in the course of his travels. If the PCs should learn that TK is an alien, they would have to deal with this knowledge; if they reveal his secret, they are exposing him to potential harm, and if they hide the information they are in violation of U.N. treaty.

Personality

The Timekeeper is an alien, so his behavior strikes others as odd. His sense of humor, in particular, is out of step with the average American. TK does not comprehend the human concept of laughter. He can be amused by some things, but the causes seem rather bizarre.

The Timekeeper places a high value on personal honor and duty. This expresses itself in his devotion to his Defense Squad, and to protecting the average citizen. He has transferred his vow to guard the Precursor time machine to an oath to shield innocents from harm. He has a deep-rooted need to serve a cause, and he would feel lost without one.

Abilities

Like all Rynkarians, the Timekeeper is able to boost his strength and speed through an act of will. His clan practiced selective breeding, so he was born with greater inherent and potential strength than others of his race. Artral was subjected to various treatments upon reaching adulthood, further boosting his power. He can only function at peak levels for a few minutes, so he will not activate his full powers unless absolutely necessary. The extra ST he gains through concentration does *not* increase his Fatigue. The boost ability is partly psionic in nature, so it leaves a trace other psis can detect.

Battle Tactics

The Timekeeper will augment his power when faced with metahuman opponents. He will run toward a suitable opponent and attack with his staff. He prefers to face other hand-to-hand fighters, as he regards this as a true test of his skill.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower ST to 20; lower DX to 13; lower IQ to 10; lower HT to 11; lower Alertness to +2; drop Danger Sense; drop Strong Will; lower Damage Resistance to +10; drop Damage Resistance vs. generic Energy; lower Enhanced ST to +23; lower Increased Speed to +3; drop Passive Defense; drop Mind Shield.

750-point version: Raise ST to 80; raise DX to 18; raise Super Running to ×2; raise Damage Resistance to +25; raise Damage Resistance vs. generic Energy to +10; raise Passive Defense to +2.

TWILIGHT

ST 11 (10 points) IQ 14 (45 points)

DX 14 (45 points) HT 12 (20 points)

Speed: 6.50 Move: 8

Damage: Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+1

Appearance: Female human, mulatto, age 31, 5' 7", 120 lbs., light-brown hair cut into a faddish style, brown eyes, light-brown complexion.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Attractive (5 points)
 Combat Reflexes (15 points)
 Double-Jointed (5 points)
 High Pain Threshold (10 points)
 Patron: Supertemps on 9 or less (30 points)
 Toughness: DR +1 (10 points)

Disadvantages:

Addiction: Tobacco (-5 points)
 Bad Sight: Nearsighted (-10 points)
 Code of Honor: Hero's (-15 points)
 Duty: Supertemps on 12 or less (-10 points)
 Enemy: KGB on 6 or less (-15 points)
 Overconfidence (-10 points)
 Secret: Identity (-20 points)
 Sense of Duty: To the underprivileged (-10 points)
 Stubbornness (-5 points)

Super Advantages:

Costume (20 points)
 Damage Resistance +15 (Only when in Shadow Form -2; 60 points)
 Dark Vision (Can see colors +2; Only when in Shadow Form -2; 25 points)
 Passive Defense +2 (Only when in Shadow Form -2; 40 points)
 Shadow Form (Can carry Medium Encumbrance +5; Mute when activated -2; 65 points)
 Stretching×3 (Only when in Shadow Form -2; 36 points)

Power and Super-Skills:

Darkness Power 3 (21 points)
 Animate Shadow-14 (Can dispel shadows at will +2; Extended Duration +4; No Concentration +2; Rapid Fire×3 +9; 80 points)
 Blind-12 (4 points)
 Create Darkness-12 (4 points)

Skills:

Acrobatics-14 (4 points); Acting (1 point); Area Knowledge (Washington, D.C.)-14 (1 point); Area Knowledge (World)-14 (1 point); Bolas-15 (4 points); Camouflage-14 (1 point); Computer Operation-13 (½ point); Criminology-15 (4 points); Demolition-12 (½ point); Detect Lies-13 (2 points); Diplomacy-12 (1 point); Driving (Car)-14 (2 points); Economics-11 (½ point); Electronics Operation (Communications)-13 (1 point); Electronics Operation (Security Systems)-13 (1 point); Escape-12 (1 point); Fast-Talk-14 (2 points); French-



13 (1 point); German-13 (1 point); Guns (Pistol)-16 (1 point); Judo-13 (2 points); Karate-15 (8 points); Law-14 (4 points); Parachuting-13 (½ point); Running-12 (4 points); Russian-14 (2 points); Sex Appeal-12 (1 point); Spanish-12 (½ point); Stealth-14 (2 points); Swimming-13 (½ point)

Quirks:

Dreads her 40th birthday (can't believe she passed 30!)
 Drives too fast — often gets ticketed
 Never talks about her years with the CIA
 Watches The Comedy Channel on cable TV
 Never eats chocolate

Story

Jeanette Atchison had a difficult childhood. She was the daughter of a white father and a black mother and grew up in northern Florida during the late 50s and early 60s; consequently, she never really fit in with other children, and never really considered herself to be either black or white — more like a minority of one.

The civil rights movement of the 60s had a profound effect on Jeanette. She determined that education was the road to success, and that more minorities needed to possess prestigious jobs. Her father was a lawyer, and she decided to follow in his footsteps. In the heady atmosphere of the 60s, being a lawyer and helping

lawyer and *helping* people was a great ideal. Jeanette intended to work as a public defender.

But after she had only finished three years of undergraduate work, her mother was stricken with a debilitating disease. The medical bills were enormous, and Jeanette's father simply could not afford to both pay the doctors and keep Jeanette in school.

Jeanette applied for every scholarship she could find; in desperation, she even started claiming minority status on application forms — something she had steadfastly refused to do before, but her grades simply weren't good enough to distinguish her from the other applicants.

She realized that she would have to drop out of school until she could get enough money to return. Jeanette applied for many jobs and took all the civil service tests she could find. Eventually she got an interview with the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA was impressed with her, and after a rather *thorough* background investigation, offered her a position.

Jeanette worked in the administrative branch of the Agency for two years before she was offered the opportunity to train to be an agent. She was somewhat nervous about the implications of being an agent, but rationalized that the CIA was helping guarantee freedoms around the globe.

After her training, she was posted to assignments in embassies in eastern Europe, where she collected information from field operatives, processed it and sent it back to Washington. She did her work flawlessly, and was rotated back to the U.S. several times to be trained in espionage herself.

Eventually, Jeanette was assigned to espionage work in her own right. The pay was better and the assignments were more exciting, but there was added danger as well. For three years she managed to avoid the danger, but it eventually caught up with her as she was attempting to photograph a Czechoslovakian munitions plant. A guard heard the whir of her camera, searched the darkness until he found her, trained a laser-guided rifle on her and fired three shots before she had a chance to react.

Miraculously, Jeanette's long-dormant metahuman physiology activated, transforming her into a shadow that instantly "fell" to the ground as the bullets sped past. The guard watched the spot she had occupied, but could find no trace of her (and was later reprimanded for firing his weapon without reason).

Her subsequent report included her metahuman manifestation, of course. The CIA was ecstatic to find that one of its top-line agents was a metahuman. They subjected her to tests to determine the extent of her powers, then trained her in the use of them. Finally, they began to send her on highly dangerous missions the CIA brass deemed impossible for other agents.

Jeanette still performed flawlessly, though she began to have doubts. She had joined the CIA by convincing herself that she was protecting the freedoms of individuals, but the missions she was being sent on involved the administration's particular political agenda. After six months, she decided she had had it and tendered her resignation.

Of course, the CIA was *not* happy to lose such a valuable agent. They tried to convince her to stay, but her mind was made up. She signed what seemed like volumes of non-disclosure statements and releases, and was once again an average citizen — except for her super abilities.

Now that she was out of the CIA, she wondered what to do with her life. Going back to school again didn't interest her any more; she wanted to help people right away, without waiting another five years to be a lawyer.

Jeanette had metahuman abilities, and it seemed as though the easiest way to use those abilities would be to join a new organization called Supertemps. They accepted her, suggested a name ("Twilight") and assigned her to lead a Defense Squad in

Pittsburgh. It's been several years now, and she hasn't looked back; she works for the Guardian Division when they need her, and in her off time counsels inner-city children.

Campaign Role

One of the PCs might have met Twilight at college. It's also possible she met one of them while in the CIA; this could lead to an international scenario as Twilight and the PCs get involved in a plot that began in her CIA days.

Personality

Jeanette is driven by a desire to aid people. Her heart goes out to the poor and the victimized. As Twilight, she makes numerous charity appearances, and as Jeanette Atchison, she volunteers some time every week to help charitable organizations.

Her relationship with her father disintegrated after her mother died. When working in Washington, D.C., she was unable to visit them as often as she would have liked, and when she was posted overseas, the CIA prohibited her from contacting them. Her father never understood, and has never forgiven her; this disturbs her greatly.

Abilities

Twilight was trained by the CIA (to be blunt) as a spy. Though her primary duty was surveillance, she also received weapons and martial-arts training as a matter of course. She usually carried a Beretta 9mm pistol and a bola or two on her missions; more than being a flamboyant weapon, the bola saved her life a couple of times when her enemies weren't expecting it!

All of her metahuman powers deal with manipulation of shadow, the absence of light, as a physical entity. Not only can Twilight transform her body into a two-dimensional shadow, she can project "darkness" into an area or at a victim's eyes (producing temporary blindness). When she takes the form of a shadow, Twilight can see in complete darkness, enjoys greater protection from injury, and can stretch portions of her body.

She can also create shadows, which she can command to attack her foes. These shadows are easily destroyed, but she can summon them quickly — up to four per second. She may dispel them as she pleases, and they will never harm her or her allies.

Battle Tactics

In most skirmishes, Twilight's first action will be to transform into a shadow (in order to ensure her own safety). Depending on the situation, she may use the Animate Shadow skill to summon allies, or Create Darkness to cause confusion and distraction in her enemies. Some foes, especially powerful ones, are best dealt with using Blind. Though it does no damage, its effects may permit a quick rescue or escape.

Power Variations

250-point version: Lower IQ to 13; drop Double-Jointed; drop High Pain Threshold; drop Toughness; drop Damage Resistance; drop Dark Vision; drop Passive Defense; drop Stretching; drop Extended Duration and No Concentration enhancements; lower Rapid Fire enhancement to $\times 1$; lower Judo skill level to 12.

750-point version: Raise ST to 12; raise DX to 16; raise HT to 13; add Super Running (Only when in Shadow Form -2); add Increased Speed +3 (Only when in Shadow Form -2); raise Passive Defense to +6; add No Concentration to Shadow Form; raise Shadow Form enhancement to Heavy Encumbrance; raise Running skill level to 14.

WATCHDOG

ST 11 (10 points) IQ 15 (60 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 11 (10 points)

Speed: 5.25 Move: 2

Damage: Thrust 1d-1, Swing 1d+1

Appearance: Male human, black, age 45, 6' 0", 170 lbs., thinning black hair in military-style haircut, brown eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Charisma +1 (5 points)

Combat Reflexes (15 points)

Eidetic Memory (30 points)

Empathy (15 points)

Intuition (15 points)

Reputation +2 (10 points)

Strong Will +3 (12 points)

Very Wealthy (30 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Upholds the law (but is willing to bend it), Won't break his word (-10 points)

Enemy: KKK/White Supremacists on 6 or less (-15 points)

Hard of Hearing (-10 points)

Lame: Paralyzed (-35 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Odious Personal Habit: Too truthful (-5 points)

Sense of Duty: Veterans, acquaintances, business clients (-10 points)

Truthfulness (-5 points)

Power and Super-Skill:

ESP Power 40 (120 points)

Precognition-15 (No Obvious Effect +3; Reduced Fatigue Cost x 8; 96 points)

Super Equipment:

Anti-Surveillance Tool Kit (Can be stolen by stealth, -10%; 50 points)

Invisibility to Machines (Area Effect +4; Affects Others 4; Movable Area +3; Switchable +1)

Computer-Enhanced Surveillance Goggles (Breakable: DR 2, HP 6 -15%; Can Be Hit at -4 -15%; 20 points)

See Invisible (Switchable +1)

Skills:

Administration-14 (1/2 point); Armoury (Firearms)-14 (1/2 point); Bard-15 (1 point); Camouflage-15 (1 point); Computer Operation-15 (1/2 point); Computer Programming-14 (1 point); Demolition-15 (1 point); Detect Lies-18 (1 point); Driving (Car)-11 (1 point); Electronics Operation (Communications)-15 (1 point); Electronics Operation (Security Systems)-15 (1 point); Electronics Operation (Sensors)-15 (1 point); Fast-Draw (Pistol)-13 (1 point); First Aid-16 (1 point); French-13 (1/2 point); Genetics-12 (1/2 point); Gesture-16 (1 point); Gunner (Machine gun)-14 (1 point); Guns (Assault rifle)-14 (1 point); Guns (Pistol)-15 (2 points); History (Metahumans)-19 (1 point); History (Warfare)-19 (1 point); History-13 (0 points); Holdout-17 (3 points); Intelligence Analysis-16 (3 points); Interrogation-15 (1 point); Judo-13 (8 points); Karate-12 (4 points); Knife-12

(1 point); Law-14 (1 point); Leadership-18 (4 points); Lock-picking-16 (2 points); Merchant-15 (1 point); Poisons-12 (1/2 point); Research-18 (4 points); Shadowing-15 (1 point); Stealth-13 (4 points); Strategy-17 (4 points); Survival (Jungle)-15 (1 point); Tactics-21 (8 points); Tactics (Metahumans)-20 (7 points); Teaching-17 (3 points); Traps/TL7-18 (4 points); Vietnamese-15 (1 point); Writing-15 (1 point)

Quirks:

Sings in the bathtub

Likes breakfast cereal — often eats it for lunch and dinner

Will not tolerate condescension or bigotry

Prefers trains to airplanes

Night owl

Story

As a kid, Sam Mitchell always seemed to know what would happen next. He knew what gifts he would get for Christmas and on his birthday, and from whom. He realized months in advance his parents would divorce when he was ten. And he knew when his teachers would give a pop quiz. Everyone, including Sam, just thought he was a good guesser. No one, least of all Sam, suspected he was a metahuman.

Sam graduated from high school and went to West Point, then to the Infantry Officers' Basic Course, then was assigned to Vietnam and placed in charge of an infantry platoon. Sam was a no-nonsense lieutenant, but he earned the respect of his men by listening to them and following their advice rather than slavishly "going by the book." His prescience helped him keep himself and his men alive.

Unfortunately, his predictions weren't always enough to pinpoint the source of danger. One hot, humid afternoon, while Sam and his men were out on patrol, he had a feeling of grave danger. He ordered his men to take cover; as he was diving for a stand of bamboo, two rounds of rifle fire caught him in the back. The soldiers took out the enemy sniper, but Sam had earned a ticket home the hard way. One of the bullets had severed his spinal cord; he was paralyzed from the waist down.

Sam spent several months in the hospital, then retired with 100% disability pay. He had always wanted to be a soldier, and now that that option was closed to him, he didn't know what he would do. Luckily, while he was in the hospital, several of the members of his platoon were discharged. One, Ben Wilkins, hadn't forgotten the lieutenant who had saved his life several times. He persuaded his father to give Sam a job at the family business; the Wilkins Rifle and Ammunition Company, one of the largest firearms manufacturers in the Midwest.

Sam started out as a machine operator, then moved into the front office as a clerk. After a few weeks on the job, his precognitive ability — which had been dormant most of the time he was in the hospital — warned him that the factory would be broken into that night. Sam approached the foreman, who was skeptical; he then talked to Ben, who convinced his father to listen to Sam. The three of them double-checked the plant and found that an alarm in a sensitive area had been deactivated.

Wilkins immediately ordered a stakeout, caught the thief in the act, and found him to be the one of the plant's security men! The next day Wilkins gave Sam the now-vacant post of Assistant Chief of Security in charge of special projects. This gave Sam

time to research security systems, devices, techniques, corporate espionage and other related matters he knew little about. He found the subject fascinating. When he had exhausted all the written sources he could find, he went to experts in the field, mostly other security officers — but even convicts willing to talk about their methods. Finally, he pulled some strings to get information from friends in the Army's Criminal Investigation Division on cutting-edge technologies and procedures.

When Wilkins' security chief moved on a year later, Sam was promoted to the position. He made several changes in the department, revising procedures and making changes in personnel. The result was a well-oiled security department and a dramatic drop in thefts, from 2.6% the previous year to less than .6%.

Sam had done his job too well; he began to feel bored. He asked permission to quit his full-time job to become a free-lance consultant. Wilkins agreed after Sam promised to continue to look after Wilkins' business as his first client. Wilkins was so impressed that Sam had bothered to request permission, he even helped secure Sam's first outside assignments.

So Assured Security, Inc. was born. Sam started out slowly, largely due to the expense often required to implement his proposals. But as time went by, it became clear that companies protected by ASI saved at least as much as they spent. Within a few years, ASI had become a modest success story with an impeccable reputation.

This reputation led a private metahuman team to contact Sam. They had secured funds to convert an abandoned building into a base and wanted advice on how to protect it. Sam was intrigued by the challenge and gladly accepted. He began to study metahumans and metahuman teams in order to do the job right.

Sam spent time with the group to identify specific needs. He noticed that their training sessions were well thought out, but lacked any expert tactical knowledge. He made some suggestions to improve efficiency, and soon was hired to train them.

The more Sam studied and worked with metahumans, the more he enjoyed working with them and the more he suspected his "hunches" were a manifestation of a metahuman power. The members of the team agreed with him, and Sam had himself tested to make sure. When the tests came back positive, the media had a field day. Sam became an instant celebrity; one of the newspapers tagged him with the name "Watchdog," which he found rather amusing.

Sam registered with Supertemps in order to facilitate contact with other metahuman groups who wanted his services. He continues to study metahumans, concentrating on their tactical strengths and weaknesses. He has compiled the largest known personal database of metahuman information, and used it to write his book, *The Metahuman in Combat* (New York: Quadrant, 1986). *The Metahuman in Combat* is considered the definitive text on the subject, and is required reading for all Supertemps Defense Squads (and in the

United States Military Academy!).

He continues to work as a security and tactical consultant, and his schedule is extremely tight. His most noteworthy accomplishment to date has been the assembling of President King's metahuman bodyguards. Sam warned them an assassination attempt was likely at King's inauguration; this forewarning was one of the reasons the White Wizard failed (see p. SU109).

Campaign Role

Anyone with an interest in security may want to hire the Watchdog. Groups moving into a new base may consult him on their security needs. Established teams may want to upgrade an old system. Teams that lack a good tactician may hire Sam as a consultant. Veterans may have served with him during the war; Sam Mitchell is known to have a soft spot in his heart for veterans (especially disabled and Vietnam-era), and will find a job for a fellow veteran if he can. Watchdog could even become a supporting member of a PC super-team, but he obviously wants to stay away from the action!

Personality

Sam Mitchell is an easygoing optimist, despite his disability. He is unflinchingly truthful, however, which to some people comes across as tactlessness. He maintains a belief in hard work and personal integrity instilled in him by his father. He enjoys the company of other metahumans, due to the excitement and the fact that many metahumans view him as an equal, whereas "normal" people are often disturbed by him.

Abilities

Sam Mitchell's precognitive ability allows him to "see" the possible future. He seldom actually sees visions; usually he simply has a gut feeling that something is likely to happen. Sam is particularly adept at sensing immediate danger; the attack which crippled him was a rare failure of his power.

Battle Tactics

Sam does his level best to stay out of any combat, for obvious reasons. He employs two ex-Green Berets as constant bodyguards, and they will try to get Sam away from any conflict.



White Sorceress

ST 9 (-10 points) IQ 15 (60 points)

DX 12 (20 points) HT 11 (10 points)

Speed: 5.25 Move: 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-2, Swing 1d-1

Appearance: Female human, white, age 16, 5' 5", 115 lbs., shoulder-length, wavy, deep-brown hair, violet eyes.

Point Total: 500

Advantages:

Ally: Andrea Northcliffe on 15 or less (15 points)

Beautiful (15 points)

Patron: Northcliffe Family on 9 or less (20 points)

Patron: Superemps on 6 or less (15 points)

Unusual Background (25 points)

Disadvantages:

Code of Honor: Won't break her word (-10 points)

Duty: Superemps on 9 or less (-5 points)

Enemy: Dark Forces on 6 or less (-20 points)

Pacifism: Cannot harm innocents (-10 points)

Phobia (Mild): Acrophobia (fear of heights) (-10 points)

Secret: Identity (-5 points)

Sense of Duty: Everyone she knows (-10 points)

Shyness: Severe (-10 points)

Vow: To be worthy of the power given her (-10 points)

Weirdness Magnet (-15 points)

Youth (-4 points)

Super Advantage:

Extra Fatigue +6 (30 points)

Powers and Super-Skills:

Generic Full Defense Power +13 (65 points)

Magic Power 12 (240 points)

Autoteleport-16 (Physical Effect-1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -2; Unreliable: Activation 14 -1; 1 point)

Erase Signature-15 (Costs Fatigue: 2 per use -1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Extra Time -1; Takes Recharge -1; 1/2 point)

Flash-12 (Leaves Mental Signature -1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; 2 points)

Generic Crushing Missile-15 (Leaves Mental Signature -1; Requires a magic word -1; 16 points)

Generic Binding Attack-15 (Physical Effect -1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Extra Time -3; 2 points)

Generic Full Defense-16 (No Concentration +2; Physical Effect -1; 16 points)

Healing-16 (Reduced Fatigue Cost +4; Physical Effect -1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Extra Time -3; Takes Recharge -1; 1/2 point)

Illuminate-14 (Requires a magic word -1; Takes Extra Time -3; Takes Recharge -1; 1 point)

Illusion-15 (Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; Takes Extra Time -1; 2 points)

Magic Sense-15 (As Psi Sense, but works only versus magic; 12 points)

Mental Blow-15 (No Concentration +2; Emergencies Only -3; Physical Effect -1; Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; 1 point)



Mind Shield-12 (2 points)

Precognition-15 (Only for events related to magic -4; 1 point)

Telecontrol-14 (Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; 2 points)

Telereceive-15 (12 points)

Telescan-15 (Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; Takes Extra Time -1; 2 points)

Telesend-15 (Requires a magic word -1; 8 points)

Telekinesis-13 (Requires a magic word -1; Takes Recharge -1; Takes Extra Time -1; 1/2 point)

Skills:

First Aid-15 (1 point); History (Magic)-17 (1/2 point); Hypnotism-14 (2 points); Judo-12 (4 points); Knife-12 (1 point); Latin-14 (1 point); Occultism-20 (14 points); Singing-13 (4 points)

Quirks:

Likes popular music from the 60s

Drinks only water, iced tea and RC Cola

Wants to visit the family estate in England

Talks to her teddy bear when no one else is listening

Hates summer

Story

Marilyn Northcliff's paternal ancestors had always been . . . well, *eccentric*. The Northcliffe family tree included 9th-century druids, several alchemists and members of every Western secret society from the Freemasons to the Golden Dawn.

Not all of the Northcliffes were proud of their heritage, however. Marilyn's father, Howard Northcliffe, felt his family's preoccupation with the supernatural was silly and moved from England to Canada to escape it, dropping the final 'e' from his name in the process.

But one day, from out of the blue, his aunt Andrea (who even the stranger members of the family considered odd) came to visit. She told him that his daughter was destined to become a sorceress, and potentially a very powerful one. Howard was infuriated; he ordered his aunt out of the house and immediately moved to another province, not leaving a forwarding address.

Marilyn spent the next five years growing up in a small southern Ontario farming town, with no contact with the rest of her father's family. Then, when she was thirteen, she went on an overnight trip to Toronto with a church group — her first trip away from her parents for any substantial length of time. That night her roommate went to another room to visit with some friends. Marilyn, alone in her room, opened the door and was grabbed by a man with a gun. He released the safety, pointed the gun at her head . . . and fell down, taking Marilyn with him. She stood up, screamed, and saw two totally unexpected things: a woman in a white kaftan and an ornate dagger in the man's back.

Andrea retrieved her dagger, grabbed Marilyn's hand and rushed her out of the room before anyone spotted them. As they drove for the U.S. border, Andrea told her grandniece about the Northcliffe family. Marilyn had been under constant watch and protection since she was two years old; she was destined to be a powerful sorceress. Unfortunately, certain practitioners of the Black Arts knew this too, and wanted her neutralized — she would be a powerful weapon in the fight against them.

They drove through the night, eventually reaching Boston before dawn. As the sun rose, Andrea pulled up in front of a small bookstore with no name in the window. As they walked in, the old woman behind the counter rose to greet them. "I believe this is what you're looking for," she said as she handed Marilyn a large book with a white cover. Marilyn took the book, and she and her great-aunt left the store. Just before they got back into the car, Marilyn looked back, but where the store had been moments ago, there was merely a boarded-over storefront which looked like it had been abandoned for years.

Marilyn and Andrea spent the next few weeks as the guest of a coven in upstate New York, while Marilyn read the book. She devoured its contents, learning more and more about magic. As she turned the last page, she felt a surge of energy course through her, creating a blinding light in her room. When the light subsided and the energy dissipated, the book had disappeared, and in its place was a hooded white cape.

That night they left the protection of the coven. Margaret explained that the area was no longer safe; the people who wanted Marilyn neutralized would have detected the energy and would be looking for her again. In fact, the coven would abandon their house and move, but they would be safe in their new location.

Marilyn's great-aunt moved her again and again, teaching her to use her new-found powers. She missed her family, but realized that returning home would only bring danger to her loved ones, and when she explained what had happened, her father might throw her out again. She accepts her fate, but she still cried the first time she saw her picture on the side of a carton of

milk. (She also realized she could be spotted, so she started wearing a pair of glasses as a disguise.)

Supertemps was a perfect way for Marilyn to earn some money for them to live on and at the same time learn to use her powers. She has done several assignments for them, becoming stronger and more capable with each challenge. Being a member of Supertemps had other unexpected benefits as well; Marilyn has been attacked three times by her enemies since joining Supertemps. The first time she and her great-aunt fended off the attack, but each attack was stronger than the previous one, and she had to telepathically summon several of her co-workers to help them withstand the third attack. She is now on constant guard against her enemies, and is looking forward to the day when she will be strong enough to take the initiative and go looking for *them*.

Campaign Role

Characters from Toronto, Windsor, Niagara Falls or anywhere in between (or who were in the area when the attempted kidnapping occurred) may remember the news reports of the murdered assassin and the girl who disappeared. (The incident merited 20 seconds in Detroit and Buffalo, and little else in the rest of the U.S.) A character might also remember seeing her picture on a "Have You Seen Me?" poster.

A character might also belong to one of the secret societies the Northcliffe family is involved in. Some of these secret societies are keeping track of Marilyn for their own purposes; at least one is protecting her. Another interesting twist might be to have a character involved with one of the secret societies trying to track Marilyn down!

To make things *really* interesting, add either a private investigator, hired by Marilyn's father to find her, or (if Andrea has been linked to the disappearance) a U.S. Marshall with an extradition warrant — or both!

Personality

Marilyn Northcliff has been forced to grow up much faster than anyone should. She is extremely serious for her years, and a need to be suspicious of strangers has made her quite shy. At the same time, she craves affection and friendship, mostly because they are so hard for her to get. She desperately wants to succeed, and the pressure of her life places her under a great deal of strain. Her great-aunt Andrea helps her over the rough spots, and Marilyn loves her dearly.

Abilities

White Sorceress can cast a wide variety of spells, which she learned from the mysterious white book. Her primary abilities lie in telepathic skills. Many of her spells require an incantation; she is unable to cast these if silenced in any way.

A bright yellow aura surrounds White Sorceress when she uses skills with a physical effect. Her Magic Sense functions the same as Psi Sense, but is used to detect magic. It will not pick up normal psionic use.

Battle Tactics

White Sorceress is hardly a front-line fighter, so she usually tries to remain at the edges of a conflict. She relies on Illusion as her main attack, occasionally attempting Telecontrol. She prefers not to project magical bolts of energy (her Generic Crushing Missile), but will if necessary. When attacked directly, she will instinctively strike back with a Mental Blow. If the threat persists she can still use the Mental Blow, but may opt to use another power.

SUPERTEMPS

Application for Employment

Hero name (if any) _____ Real name (optional) _____

Please provide an address, telephone number, or some other means through which you may be contacted.

Describe your powers as precisely as possible. Indicate if they have been documented (news footage, eyewitness accounts, etc.).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Vulnerabilities (optional) _____

Do you have a geographic preference? _____ Would you be willing to relocate? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Which division are you applying for? (Check all that apply.) ☐ Guardian ☐ Industrial ☐ Entertainment

Which types of teammates would you care to work with? _____

This section is optional.

Provide any character references you feel would aid Supertemps in its decision. *Do not list relatives.*

Name _____ Name _____

Address _____ Address _____

Relationship with applicant _____ Relationship with applicant _____

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? (If yes, explain on the back of this sheet.) _____

Do you consent to a genetic examination, if necessary? ☐ Yes ☐ No

All information and statements herein are accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature _____ Date _____

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Edited by Creede Lambard
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ISBN 1-55634-169-5

SJG00895 6406

Made in the U.S.A.